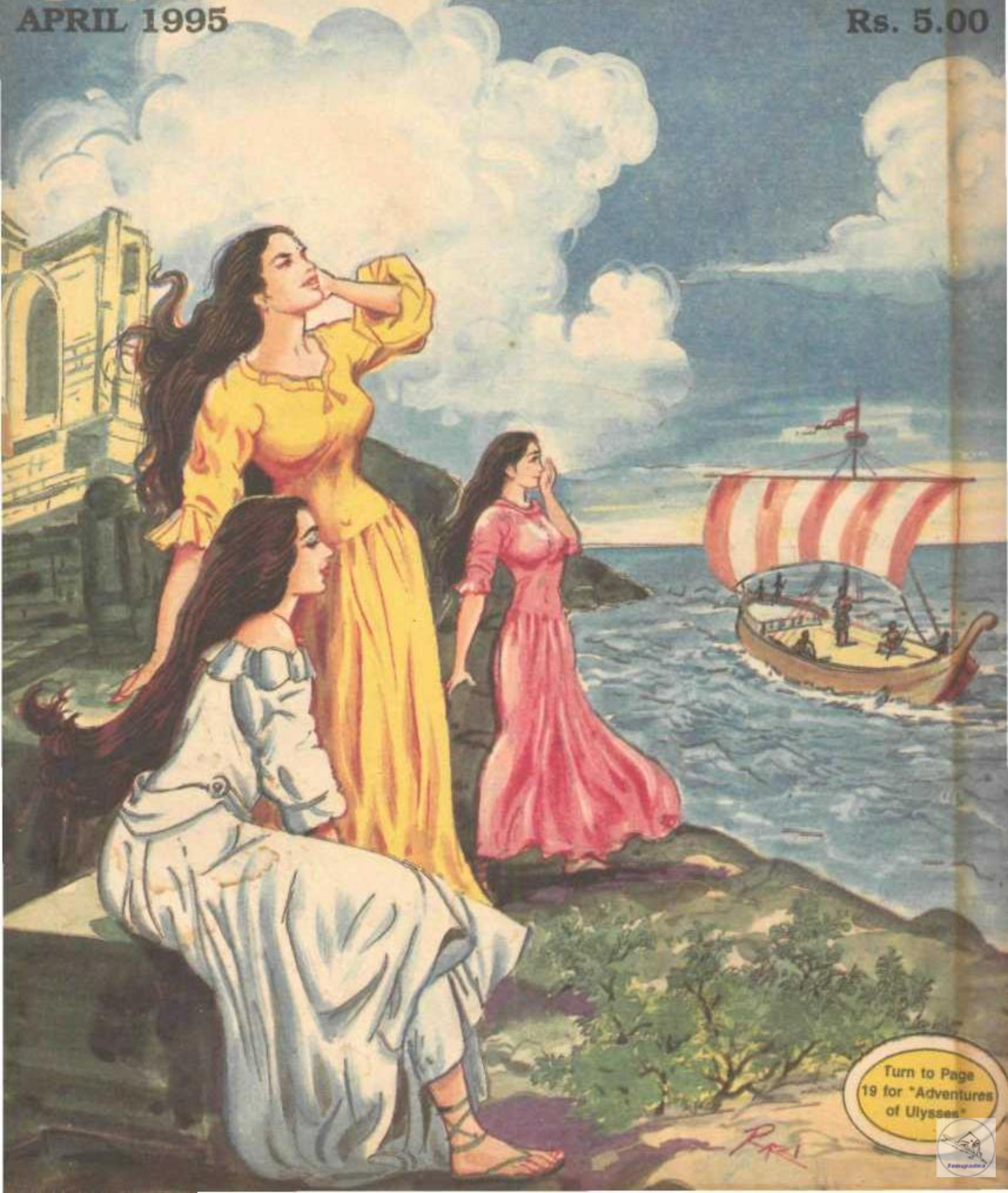


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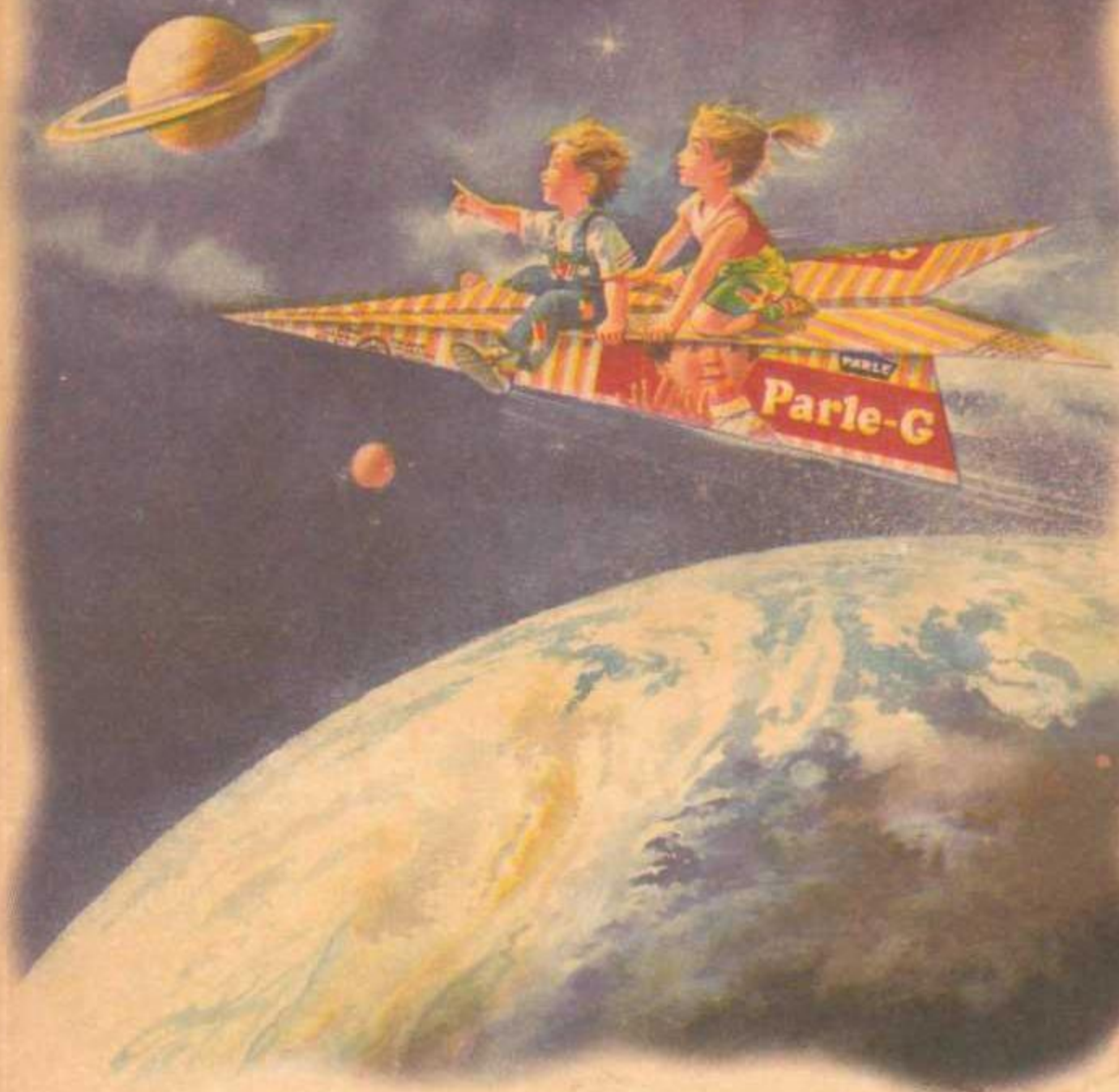
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19 for "Adventures
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CHANDAMAMA

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NEXT ISSUE

Vol. 25 MAY 1995 No. 11

KING RAGHAVENDRA: The curse by the boy that Raghavendra will die within two months brings about a feeling of remorse in the king. At the instance of King Chitrasena, the sage Yogananda visits the Kingdom of Kanaka and instils some courage in Raghavendra. The king is now eager to serve his people in atonement of his neglect in the past. When the affairs of the state appear to improve and the people begin admiring their ruler for the first time after years of misrule, the kingdom is beset with complaints of theft – from houses, temples, and public places. Raghavendra himself goes about catching culprits who are given exemplary punishment. His suspicion now centres round a man and a woman. He puts them to a test. Who will come out unscathed?

THE FAIRIES DANCE : Naniji tells the story of her strange experience to her grand children. And that is about the sight that greeted her when she wandered deep into a wood. The flowers have made a perfect circle! She keeps it a secret from her friends, but tells her grandfather who knows about fairies, elves, and pixies. The two decide to visit the place to see the fairies dance. Do they see them? A story contributed by a young reader.

PLUS the last of the adventures of Ulysses, another story from the Mahabharata, Panchatantra in comics, pull-out on the Forts of India, and all the regular features.

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Founder
CHAKRAPANI



Controlling Editor :
NAGI REDDI

Real Learning

By now some children would have already finished writing their annual examinations, while the others will still be either writing them or going through the final preparations to face their most important test of the year. Passing in these tests, or even failing in them, has become a routine affair, inasmuch as the results decide for them whether they are qualified to move into the next higher class.

The question asked is: are these examinations the only criteria to find out how much the children have really learnt in a year? What exactly is their achievement? or attainment? or learning? This was the object of a study conducted on behalf of the Government by an official body. Using the same measuring scale for a lower class and a higher one, the study revealed that as the children move up to the higher classes, there is a decline in the amount of learning; there is also a deterioration in their attainment. The study did not take into consideration their performance in examinations where they might have even scored cent per cent marks.

The study launched in 1989 covered more than 60,000 children in 20 odd States, and took over three years to be completed and another two years for the finding to be analysed. It is somewhat clear that children do not look beyond their examinations and grasp only that much enough to take them through the periodical as well as final tests. They do not dare try and acquire knowledge beyond what they read in their text-books or what is taught to them in the classroom. The study feels that children in the capital cities have a better attainment than their counterparts in rural areas. The study also finds disparity between boys and girls in respect of learning. Strangely, in quite a few States, girls excelled the boys. The survey concluded that much would depend on the teachers, and how much of their knowledge they would impart to children.

IS THE FATE OF THE BOOK SEALED IN THE IDIOT BOX?

They call the TV the 'Idiot Box'. We don't. We look upon it as a sort of Arabian Nights genie. It can be vicious; it can be nice. All at its master's bidding.

But even if it were nice – very nice – it can never be a substitute for the book. Why? Reasons are many. Here we give only two. When you read a tale from *Panchatantra* or *Aesop*, **you** imagine the scene, **you** imagine the character. When the same story is presented on the TV, it is someone else who is imagining for you. **Your** imagination does not get a chance to be active. Then, a great book makes you think. You delve deep into your mind, your consciousness, when you read the *Gita* for example. No TV can ever make you do that.

Reading is a must.

Reading good books is a creative adventure.

There is no alternative to it.

But books are growing costly.

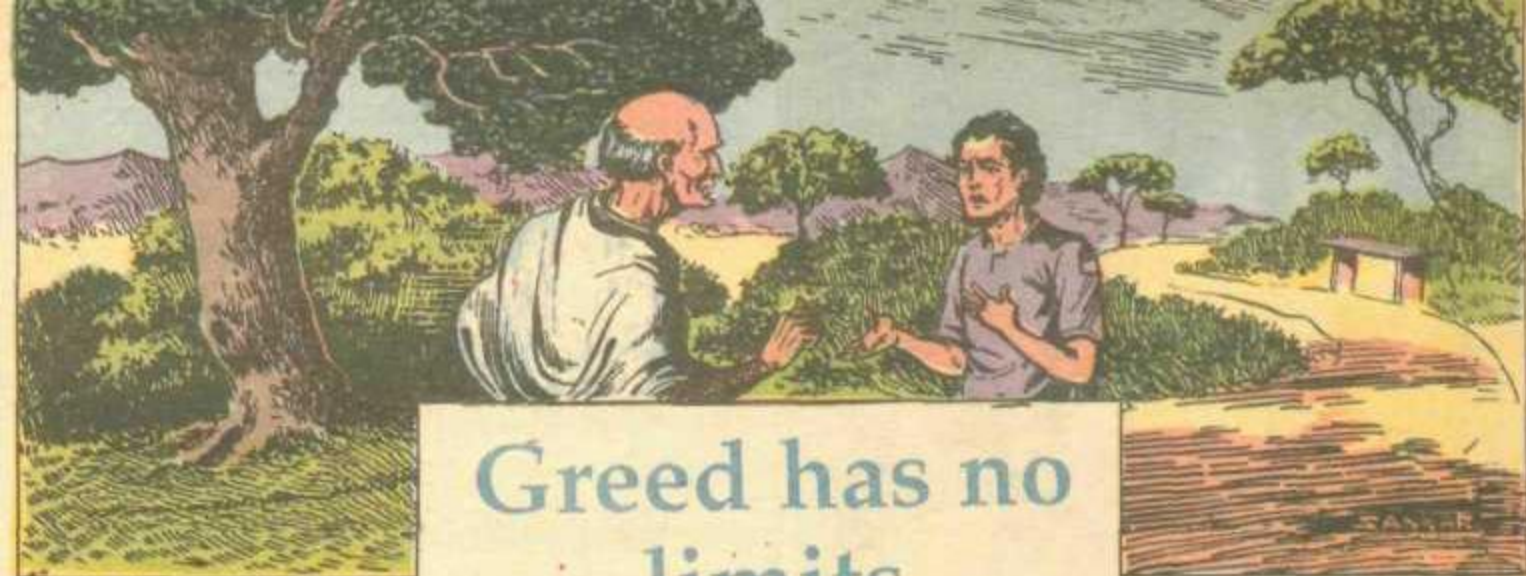
Also, there is a dearth of worthy books for the young.

CHANDAMAMA takes up the challenge. Its publication programme will be a friend-philosopher-guide for you. It will give you books that matter – tales of light, wit, and delight – of our unique heritage and history – legends, myths, as well as stories of today.

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Look out for details in the forthcoming issues of your magazine.





Greed has no limits

Ramsingh was a poor villager. He was so poor that he was forced to beg for alms and food not only in his village but in the neighbouring villages also. Once, for three days at a stretch, he did not get any food. So, he decided to move to another village. As he walked with great difficulty, he was accosted by an old man. "You look very tired," he remarked, pityingly. "Here, take this groundnut." The old man placed a single pod on his outstretched palm.

"I've been going without a morsel for three days," said Ramsingh. "How, then, can this single groundnut satisfy my hunger?"

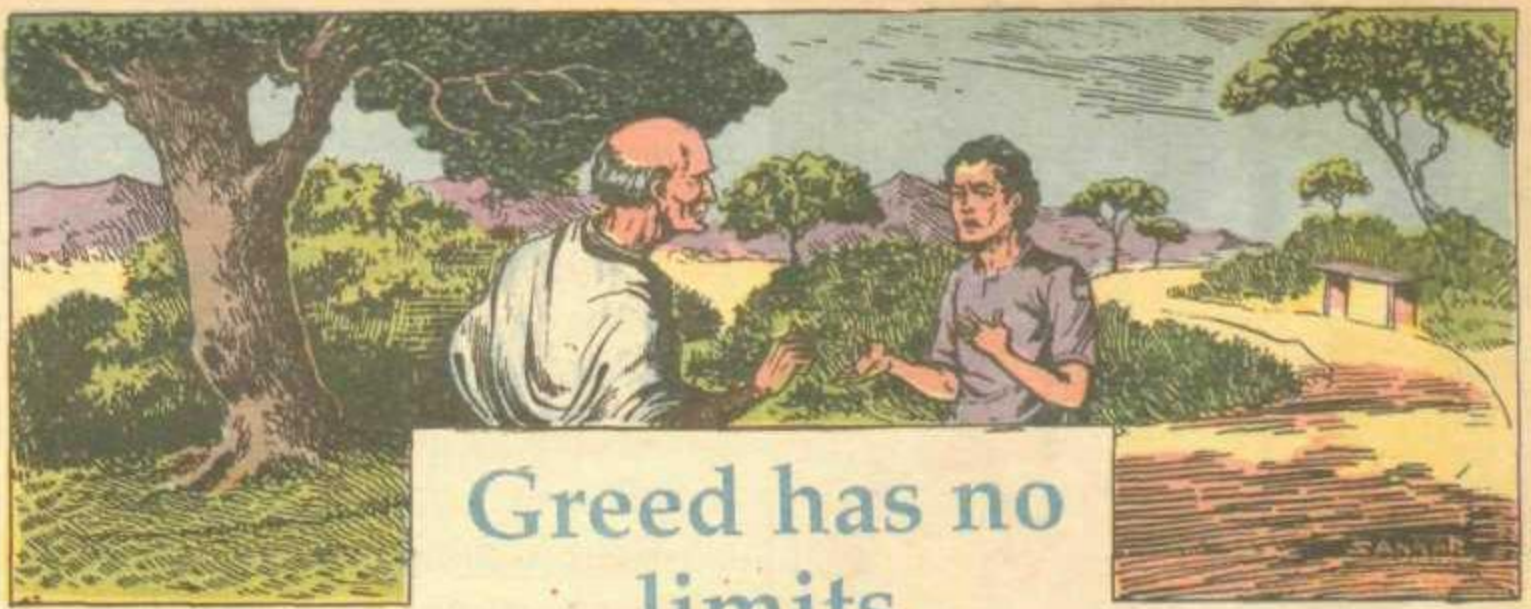
"I didn't ask you to eat it," said the old man. "Keep it with you, without eating. People will give you enough food, and you won't feel hunger any more. In fact, people will invite you and give food!"

Ramsingh did not straight away

believe the old man's words. How could a single pod of groundnut have so much mysterious power? he wondered. Anyway, he kept it with him and slowly wended his way to the nearby village. By the time he reached there, it was past dusk. He stood before the first house that he saw. "Here's a hungry man!" he cried aloud. "Could I have something to eat, please?"

The master of the house came out. When he saw Ramsingh, he took pity on him, especially because he realised, the man was not from his village and so must have been walking all the distance from the nearby village. He asked Ramsingh to come inside and gave him as much food as he could eat. "It's already night. You need not wander in search of a shelter. You may sleep here and leave tomorrow morning."

Ramsingh was overjoyed. No one



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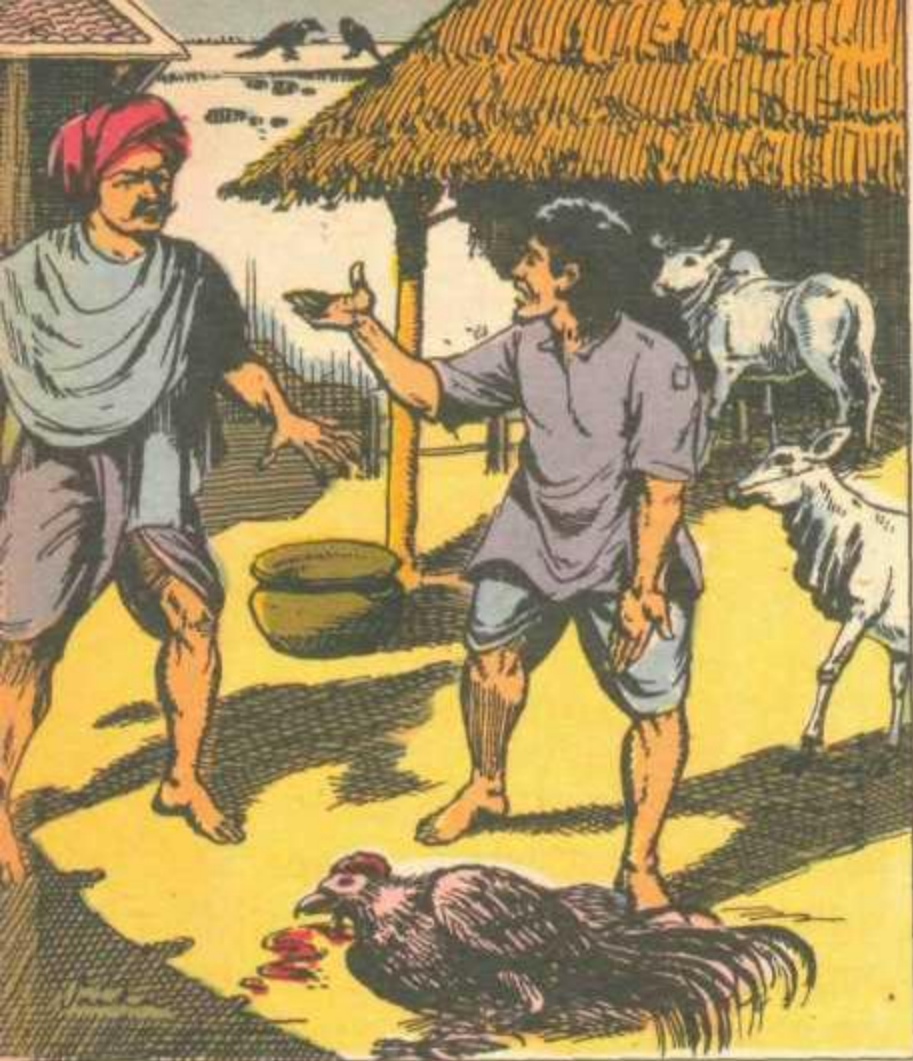
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had till then shown him such kindness. It must have all been due to the groundnut pod the old man had given him, he concluded. He decided to keep the pod safe. He kept it near his pillow and slept well. But when he woke up, what did he see? A hen had come through the open door and pecked at the pod. When she saw him getting up, she ran out with the pod. "O god! My groundnut! The hen is eating it!" he cried aloud.

The master heard the cries and rushed out. "Why this ruckus over a pod of groundnut?"

"Oh! You don't know about that pod!" wailed Ramsingh. "It is en-

dowed with some magical powers. What'll I do now?"

"I can't take it out of the hen," said the master of the house with extreme regret. "I can at the most part with the hen that has eaten your groundnut. You may take it with you."

Ramsingh had no other choice, except to accept the master's offer. He carried the hen and walked towards the next village. Again, it was night by the time he reached that place. He was not feeling hungry, but he wanted a place to sleep. He knocked at a door and asked whether he could rest there for the night. The man of the house took him inside, gave him food, and showed him a room where he could sleep. Ramsingh kept the hen near him and went to sleep.

When dawn came, the hen did not like to be confined to a room any more, and managed to go out and fight with the hens in the house. She was driven out by the other hens. As she ran for her life, she came in the way of a huge cow which gave it a fatal kick. Ramsingh, who missed the hen when he woke up, came out only to see her being kicked by a cow and die. "Ah! My hen has been killed! Killed by a cow!! What will

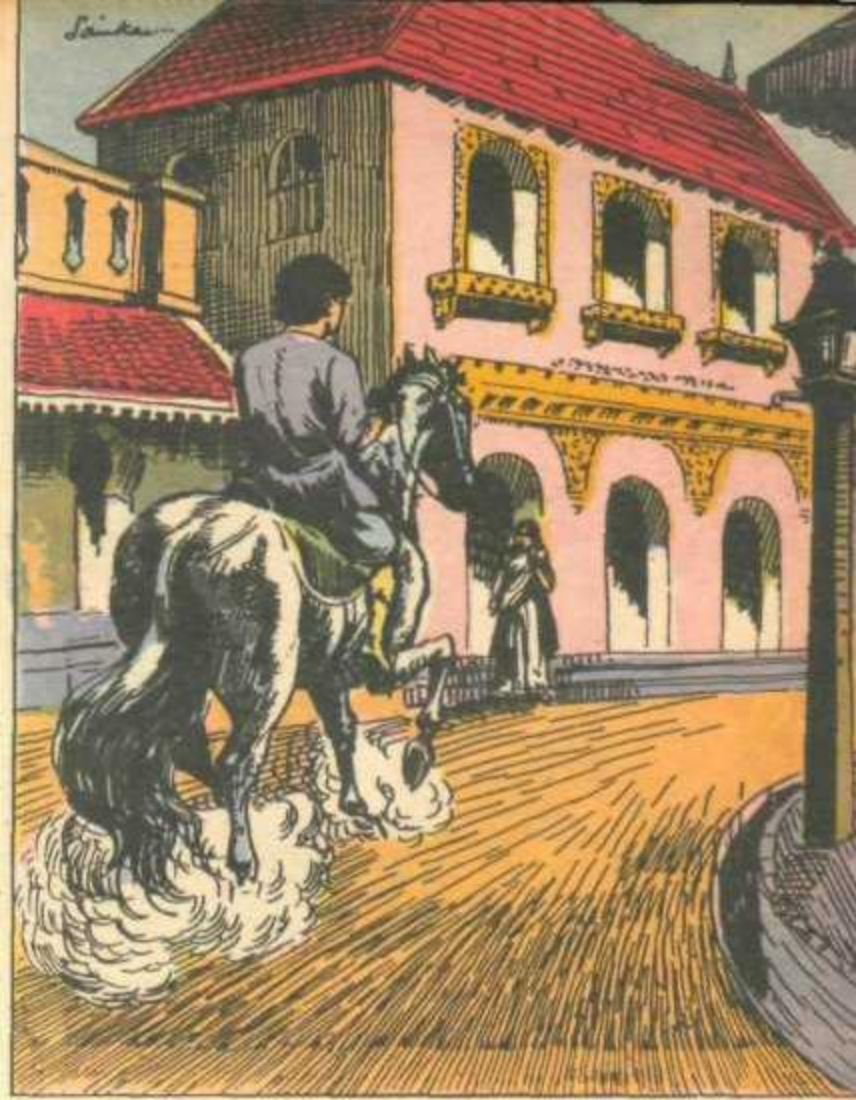


"I do now!" he wailed aloud.

The master of the house came out and pacified him by asking him to take the cow as compensation. Ramsingh led the cow as he plodded his way to another village. At the outskirts, he saw a bungalow. His knock was answered. He told the master of that house that he was a stranger to that place. "I don't know anyone here, nor do I know the way. Would you allow me to stay here overnight? I shall go away early in the morning."

"What a pity, you're a stranger in this village," the man responded. "Don't worry. You may stay here; that won't inconvenience us." And he showed him where he could sleep for the night.

The house was rather crowded, as some festivities were going on. The guests were making merry and enjoying a feast laid out for them. The host invited Ramsingh to join them, and he ate to his fill. His cow at that time broke its tether and moved to the bundles of grass stacked there and ate it to its fill. The cow did not notice the horse tied there. It did not like the intrusion of an outsider and gave the cow a violent kick with its hind legs. The cow fell down and breathed its last in no



time.

This was the sight that greeted Ramsingh when he came from the feast. He was aghast and went and quarrelled with the master. He blamed the horse for bringing about the death of his cow. The man felt ashamed and did not wish his guests to know of the tragedy and his predicament. He met the situation by handing over the horse to Ramsingh who, then, decided to leave the place immediately. He was happy when he rode the horse out of the village.

He soon reached a town. He asked the way to a lodging. When he reached there, he found a beautiful





girl standing at the porch. He was drawn by her beauty, and wished to make her his wife. He dismounted and went up to the manager and asked for a room. He found out that the girl was the manager's only daughter. He thought that if he were to marry her, he could remain in the lodging for ever and lead a happy life. He showed his horse to the manager. "Look after him well. He's not any ordinary horse. He has some magical powers."

After Ramsingh was taken to his room, the manager went to tether the horse. He did not allow him even to touch him, and scooted from there.

The manager rushed to Ramsingh and informed him of what had happened. He posed as if he was very angry with him for his carelessness. "I had asked you to take good care of him. Still you neglected it. I need not know how you would do it, but I want the horse here by tomorrow morning. If you fail, I'll then decide what I would do with you," he said sternly.

"What could I do? Before I could tether him, he ran away," said the manager, apologetically. "Where do I now go in search of him? Whatever you ask for, I shall give it you in lieu of the horse."

Ramsingh appeared giving a serious thought to the offer. "All right, you may give your daughter in marriage to me."

The manager was taken aback by his demand. But he had given his word to Ramsingh. However, he said, "This is something which is not to be decided by me alone. I must consult my daughter also." He then went inside and talked to his wife and daughter. None of them was in favour of an alliance with an unknown stranger; they also did not like the barter of a girl for a horse. However, they felt they were obliged to settle a debt. The manager's wife





had a brainwave. She disclosed it to her husband and daughter. They approved of it.

The manager then went to Ramsingh and said, "My wife has no objection, but my daughter is averse to the idea of marrying a stranger, and she appears adamant. So, we propose to tie her up in a sack and give it to you. You take her with you. After daybreak, you may open the sack, and lead her to the nearest temple and marry her in the presence of the Lord."

Ramsingh agreed to the proposal. Sometime later, the manager and his wife went to him holding a sack from both ends. He happily carried it on his shoulders, and walked out

of the lodging, whistling a tune. He forgot the weight of the sack in expectation of marrying a beautiful girl the next morning. He also did not feel any tiredness from walking all night. The moment the day broke and he was hit by the first rays of the sun, he opened the sack and said, "Come out, my sweet girl, let's go and get married."

Out jumped a dog! And it jumped with such a spring action that its legs made scratches on Ramsingh's face. It barked at him and then ran away. Ramsingh was at his wit's end. He realised the folly of being greedy. He had no other choice than to beg for alms and food in one village or another.

Feed a cold and starve a fever

The noblest vengeance is to forgive



He who in his conduct preserves a mind free from deceit will dwell in the minds of all men.

- Thirukkural



A HOLY MAN IS SEEN IN THE STREET.



NO! NO, IT CAN'T BE TRUE!
THE SAME FIGURE IN THE
SAME YELLOW ROBE!

WHAT SHALL I DO NOW?
SHOULD I SMASH THE
HEAD OF A HOLY MAN?



WITH A TREMBLING HAND
THE MERCHANT HESITAT-
INGLY REACHES FOR A
CLUB...



...AND HITS HIM HARD ON
HIS HEAD.



LO! AND BEHOLD THE
HOLY MAN TURNS INTO A
COLUMN OF GLITTERING
GOLD.



MIRACLE! THE DREAM HAS
COME TRUE!
SO, THIS IS WHAT MY
FOREFATHERS HAD LEFT!



ALL THIS IS WATCHED BY
DURBUDDHI.



DEAR FELLOW! DON'T
TELL ANYBODY ABOUT
THIS.



NO, NO! I WON'T.

TAKE THIS GOLD! AND BE
HAPPY...



DURBUDDHI GOES HOME
AND THINKS DEEPLY
ABOUT THE INCIDENT.



WELL, WELL! THAT'S IT!
WHEN A SADHU IS STRUCK
ON THE HEAD...

Let a man know the measure of his ability to give, and let him give accordingly. Such giving is the way to preserve his wealth.

...WITH A CLUB, HE TURNS INTO GOLD!



NOW I KNOW HOW TO BECOME RICH!

I KNOW A PLACE WHERE SADHUS LIVE.



THE NEXT DAY DURBUDDHI GOES TO THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CITY, WHERE SOME SADHUS LIVE.



HOLY SIRSI! PRAY STEP INTO MY HOUSE AND BLESS ME!



NO, MY BOY! WE CAN'T!

DON'T YOU KNOW WE'VE GIVEN UP ALL DESIRES AND BROKEN ALL TIES?



I FALL AT YOUR FEET. I BESEECH YOU. PLEASE STEP INTO MY HUMBLE HOME JUST ONCE!



PLEASE, DON'T SAY 'NO', SIR! GRACIOUSLY ACCEPT MY INVITATION!



ALL RIGHT. TAKE US WITH YOU!



SO, THE SADHUS FOLLOW DURBUDDHI.



HERE'S MY HOUSE!



The unlearned are like barren land - worthless. All that can be said of them is that they exist.



THE SADHUS ARE SURPRISED.



PLEASE WAIT HOLY SIRSI!



LET ME MAKE ALL ARRANGEMENTS AND CALL YOU.



HOLY SIRSI! PLEASE COME ONE AFTER THE OTHER. I WISH TO HONOUR YOU TO MY HEART'S CONTENT.



A STOUT CLUB EAGERLY AWAITS THE SADHU.



HE HITS THE HOLY MAN'S HEAD.



WHO'S NEXT? PLEASE COME!



BANG! BANG!



DURBUDDHI HITS THEM ONE AFTER ANOTHER.



TO HIS UTTER DISMAY, THEY DO NOT TURN INTO GOLD.



OUTSIDE THE HOUSE..
HELP! HELP! HELP!



WHAT'S THE COMMO-TION?

Energy is mental wealth. Those men who are destitute of it are only trees in the form of men.

A happy 'tit for tat'!

Reader Gaddam Venkateswarlu, of Hanamkonda, Andhra Pradesh, asks: What is meant by '*quid pro quo*'? It simply means, something for something. Like, you give something and take something in return, or you take something and give something in return. Everybody knows that schools and colleges these days take capitation 'fee' – which is not a regular fee – and give admission. It is a *quid pro quo* arrangement; you may even call it an agreement. Examples in politics are also not uncommon, when an opposition party agrees to support the ruling party and in return is given a place in the ministry. All these have a happy ending, though this expression in Latin really indicates an act of retaliation. Something like 'tit for tat'!

Saswata Kumar Jena, of Cuttack, Orissa, says the two terms "battle" and "war" have the same meaning, then why the statement: "*The battle may be won, but the war goes on*"? Literally, the two words have different meanings. War means a conflict between nations or parties. It can just be a 'state of war' without a single battle being fought. All students of history will know about World War I (1914-18) and World War II (1939-45). They came to be known as 'world' wars, because the battles were fought in different centres and countries of the world. Many battles were fought in the Anglo-French war, but it was the Battle of Waterloo, in which Napoleon was defeated, that ended the war. Battles are the actual fights, while war denotes the state of conflict between two entities.





As Prince Paris leads Queen Helen to his fort at Troy, the Greeks attack Troy, destroy it, and restore Helen to her husband. They then begin their return voyage to Greece. The ship of the great hero, Ulysses, the King of Ithaca, gets separated from the rest of the Greek fleet. He encounters strange adventures.

The enchantress, Circe, no doubt, loved and respected the hero Ulysses. She would have liked him to stay in her castle for ever. But she understood how homesick he and his companions had become. She let them leave her island though very unwillingly.

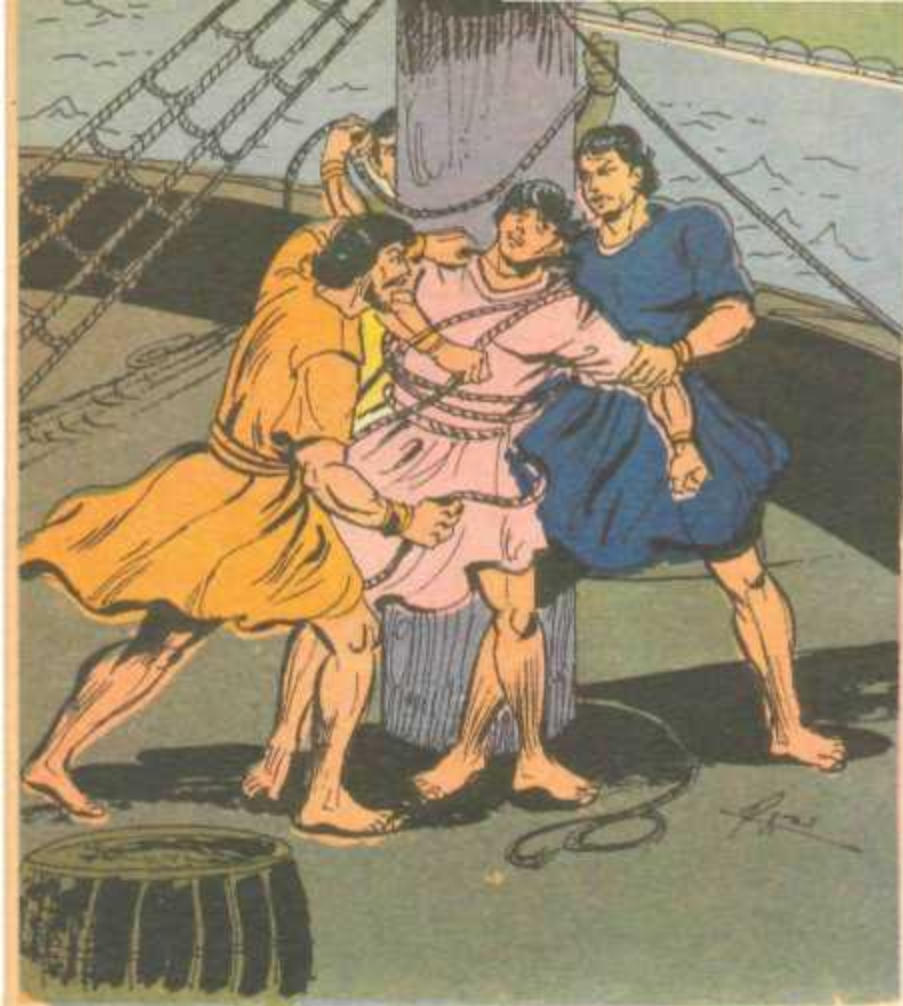
It was good that Ulysses had met Circe. Before he took leave of her,

she cautioned him about the dangers he might face on his homeward voyage. Without her guidance, it is difficult to say if Ulysses could have really reached his destination.

With a heart full of sympathy for Circe and yet delighted at leaving her island, Ulysses set sail once again.

As the ship proceeded, aided by a

7. BETWEEN SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS



helpful wind, Ulysses could see from a distance the island of the Sirens. At once he began melting a huge block of wax he had brought from Circe. He then ordered his companions to seal their ears with handfuls of that stuff. But before that, he bade them to tie him very tightly to the ship's mast.

Why must he do such queer things? The Sirens were a strange and dangerous kind of supernatural female beings. They sang so sweetly that whoever heard their song could not check himself from landing on their island. And none of such visitors returned. "There are heaps of

human bones all over the small island" – Circe had warned Ulysses.

Ulysses did not wish his companions to hear the call of the Sirens. At the same time, he would himself like to know what kind of spell their call or their music cast on the listeners. That is why he kept his ears free, but took the precaution of tying himself to the mast.

By the time the ship came closer to the island of the Sirens, Ulysses had been securely tied to the mast and his companions had sealed their ears with wax. Before long, a weird but enchanting voice was heard: "Ulysses! Come to our island, please! It is a lovely place – teeming with flowers and fruits, the likes of which you have never smelt and tasted. Come to us, and we'll entertain you to wonderful music and luxurious feasts. You'll never know anywhere else on earth the kind of happiness we can give you here. Come, Ulysses, come!"

It was indeed impossible to resist the call. Ulysses felt terribly restless. A time came when he tried to free himself from the ropes with which he had been bound at his own command. His companions, who fortunately could not hear anything, were surprised and amused.



But Ulysses had instructed them not to yield to his own gestures suggesting them to release him. The more Ulysses showed his restlessness, they bound him still tighter. For a while Ulysses behaved like one possessed by a spirit.

The Sirens went on appealing to him with greater intensity in their voices: "Come here, Ulysses! Come here, if you wish to know what happiness is!" However, by and by, the voice grew faint as the ship moved farther and farther away from the island.

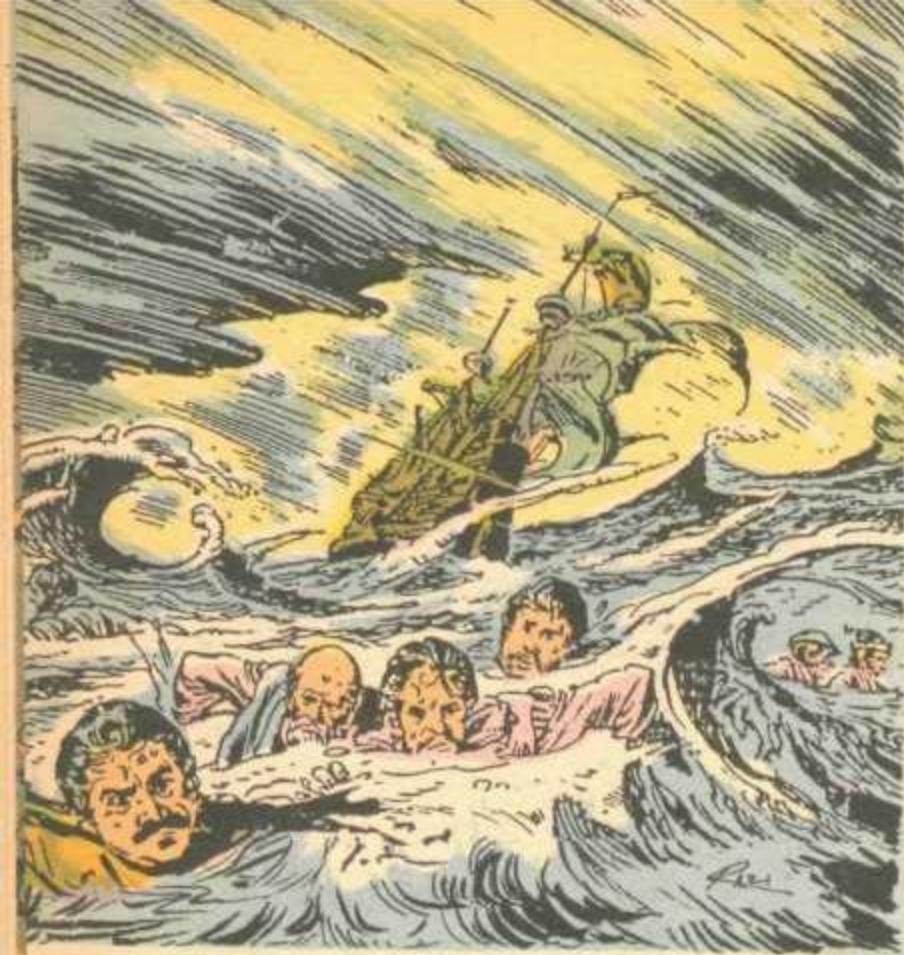
At last, when Ulysses could not hear the enticing voices any longer, he asked his companions through

calm gestures, to unseal their ears and to untie him. That was done, and all aboard were happy that they had come out of a grave danger, successfully.

All but Ulysses! How could he be happy when he knew about the still more unusual dangers ahead? He kept gazing at the horizon. Circe had warned him about two fearful sea-monsters: Scylla and Charybdis.

The six-headed monster, Scylla, sat in a cave midway up a high mountain rising out of the sea. The peak of the mountain was lost in the clouds and the cave was always screened by smoke. Suddenly Scylla would thrust out her six heads, sup-





ported by necks which could be lengthened at her will, and gobble up six from any passing ship.

But Charybdis was even more fearful. She was a monster who lived at the foot of a hill under the sea and from time to time sucked the entire water of the rocky region and then blew it out with terrific force. If any ship happened to be nearby, it too would be sucked in and then spouted out. No living being in the ship could survive that terrible experience, even if the ship itself could remain afloat.

Circe had advised Ulysses to keep closer to the mountain of Scylla and

to keep away from Charybdis. Ulysses now took his grim decision accordingly. Between Scylla and Charybdis, Scylla was less dangerous because she would take only six men and the rest would be spared. But once sucked in and spouted out by Charybdis, no one would survive.

Ulysses had not told anything about these two dangers to his companions. As soon as the ship came before the high mountain of Scylla, six sinister heads of the monster leaped out and before anybody knew what was happening, six men from the ship were gone!

They were some of the best companions of Ulysses. Lifted by the sea-monster's mouth, they cried for help and struggled to free themselves. But the sea-monster had clamped her teeth too firmly on them.

Ulysses looked on helpless, unable to do anything to save his faithful friends. He and his men had to swallow their loss. They tried to cross the area as fast as they could.

While they were still plunged in sorrow at the loss of their six valuable friends, a great thunderstorm broke out and a severe wind lashed at their ship. Lightning even struck the ship itself, killing some on board. The rest, except Ulysses, were





thrown into the waves rising high like hills and were lost. For a long time did Ulysses shout their names and look for them in and around the battered ship. But he did not find a single soul.

To his greater horror, he found the ship swept towards the rock of Charybdis from which he had earlier escaped. As he looked on, suddenly the monster began sucking the water and the ship went down. Just in time, Ulysses clutched the branch of a tree leaning from the

rock and kept hanging on to it. A little later, the demon spouted the water out. His ship, too, came out and was tossed up and then fell on the water. Luckily, it did not sink. Ulysses left the branch and dropped right into it.

Ulysses was now alone amidst the vast and dangerous sea – still dreaming of his sweet home in Ithaca. He did not have any idea how far the shore of his kingdom was!

(To conclude)

He is a wise man who speaks little

First deserve, then desire

Plain speech is better than much wit

Old men are twice children





THE CURSE OF BINDIPUR

Once Prince Ashok Varma of Chandipur was a - hunting in the forest. Somehow, he got separated from his men as he went chasing a stag. By the time he had hunted down the animal, it had become dark. As he could not know where he was, he decided to take shelter under a tall tree.

When morning came, he smelt a rare fragrance in the air. He got up and gazed towards the sky. He saw bunches of large beautiful pink flowers. It was the unique *Vasupunjaka* tree, which flowered only once in its lifetime. He wished to collect some flowers to be given to his wife, and began climbing up. As he was about to pluck the flowers, he noticed a big opening in the trunk leading downwards.

Possessed of an adventurous spirit, the prince decided to venture down and explore the strange hole in the tree. As he cautiously put his

feet into the hole, his step faltered and he fell in.

After a long time, when Ashok Varma came to his senses, he found that he was in a beautiful garden. There was a large circular lake in the middle of the garden, with water sparkling as clear as mirror. He noticed a large, swan-like statue in the lake, with steps leading from one end of the lake towards the base of the statue. Following the steps he reached a tunnel. At last, he found himself in a magnificent city, with glittering palaces, beautiful gardens, lakes, flowers, trees and birds. But strangely, the spirit of happiness seemed to be lacking in the city. Every face, from young to old, was drooping with sadness. The misery of the people gave the lie to the beauty of the surroundings. Bewildered by this strange sight, Prince Ashok Varma enquired of a passerby, the reason.

He was then told how Lord Brahma had cursed the city of Bindipur, as a result of which the people were forced to live in the underworld. Every month, some demons would come and harass the people in the city, and take away all the precious possessions of the city and the beautiful women, after causing great havoc. The people were all terrified, as the time for a visit of the demons was fast approaching.

The prince demanded to see the King of Bindipur. He introduced himself to the king. Ashok Varma understood from him that the people could not touch any weapon for their defence due to Brahma's curse. The prince felt pity at the plight of the people and wanted to help them.

He returned to his own country, collected his soldiers, and went back to Bindipur, ready to defend it. By the time they reached the underworld city, the demons were already

there, harassing the people.

Ashok Varma and his army fought a tough battle for forty days and finally managed to kill the demons.

Suddenly, the city was filled with a dazzling light. Lord Brahma appeared in all His splendour, and a voice was heard: "Your curse is over; it's time for you to return to heaven." The Lord then turned to Prince Ashok Varma, blessed him, and presented him with the sword called 'Vajrayanti', the possession of which always ensured success on the battlefield.

The entire city of Bandipur vanished before the eyes of the prince and his soldiers. They all now went back home. Prince Ashok Varma became the king after the death of his father, and ruled the country with wisdom and discretion.

— Saira, Alleppey, Kerala



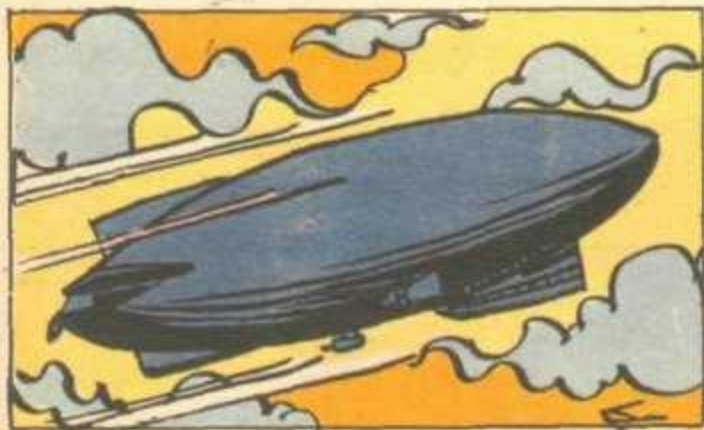
NEWS FLASH

JUST THREE

Four States in India had elections to their Assemblies in February and March. Arunachal Pradesh is one of them. It had a polling booth in Chakku, a village coming under the Trisino-Buragon constituency in Kameng district. The village has only three voters; still a full-fledged election team went, with officials, ballot boxes, ballot papers, marking ink, and all other facilities for conducting the exercise. The polling booth, located in a rather inaccessible area, could be reached only after a 3-day trek through thick forest. Yet, the process was undertaken—which shows India's faith in democracy.

FLIGHT SANS PILOT

A pilot flying a Zeppelin from Hayward in the U.S.A. on February 26 suffered a heart attack soon after he took off. He fell down to his death when the airship was hardly 70 metres above the ground, but it rose to 3,000 metres



and sailed off till it landed two hours later, fortunately, in an uninhabited area in North California. Those who had been alerted of a possible collision heaved a

sigh of relief as the Zeppelin did not hit or land on buildings.

CAT WITHOUT ADDRESS

Unlike the letters in the postal bag, Tabby did not have an address slip, though the cat travelled in it from Chandpur, in Bangladesh, to capital Dhaka 65 km away. It jumped out with a faint "meouw" when the bag was opened at the post office. It did not give



out a cry when the sack was tossed into the train or tossed out, 8 hours later at Dhaka. This happened on February 25. How did the cat get into the bag? The postal authorities are yet to find out.

CLEAN AND GREEN

Mention Antarctica, and the picture you get in your mind is just snow, snow and white snow. The little town, Mcmurdo Station, has a population of 1,200 during summer, only 200 of whom stay back in winter. Till recently, these people used to burn their trash in open pits and plow garbage into landfills, which attract sea gulls fond of food scraps. The town came to be considered one of the most polluted spots on the earth. Things have now changed, after environmentalists prompted the residents to keep the place clean and "green", though not much of vegetation can grow there.

Incognito, but how?

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time; gusts of wind shook the trees. Between thunderclaps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning revealed fearsome faces.

But King Vikramaditya did not swerve a bit. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought down the corpse. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground, with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse spoke: "O King! You seem to be making untiring efforts and without respite, as if you wish to achieve something. I pity you. Instead of enjoying comfortable sleep on a cozy bed, you're still coming after me. I admire your determination. Are you, by any chance, being carried away by someone's offers or promises? If so, you should listen to this story and decide for yourself whether you're likely to derive any benefit out of



your effort." The vampire then told him the story of Sundaresh.

He was the King of Saugandh-puri. He was the least bothered about the welfare of the kingdom. He led a life of pleasure. He entertained musicians and dancers, and he was always seen in their company. And they fully took advantage of his weakness. Chief Minister Gnanavarma tried to alert him and advise him, but to no avail. He was sad to see the slow decline of the kingdom.

One day, with great difficulty, the minister got an audience with the king, alone. He utilised the opportunity to apprise the king of the real state of affairs, and warned him that the kingdom would slip from his hands if he did not tone up the administration. After all, as minister he could only advise the king, whose function it was to rule the country.

Sundaresh was furious. He flew at his minister. "Then, what's the use of my having ministers like you? I'm afraid I won't have any need for you, if you people can't improve the situation!"

Gnanavarma stood his ground. "We may be there to advise you, but the execution of the policies and decisions is in your hands. If we go about doing your job, then people will wonder why they should have a

king at all! Try to go round the country just for a day; you'll then come to know the real situation."

"Yes, I'm ready," the king announced, instantly. "Tonight we both shall go round the kingdom." They donned ordinary clothes and went round first the capital and then the suburbs. They watched how the officials were being unscrupulous in their dealings with the public and how they were harassing even poor people.

He summoned each one of the officials to the court the next day and pulled them up. he asked for their explanation, hinting that he would give them exemplary punishment. They professed innocence and pleaded not guilty. "We're afraid, someone holding grudge against us has been carrying tales to you, your majesty."

"Stop all that nonsense!" the king shouted at them. "I had seen everything with my own eyes. Nobody recognised me because I was going about incognito."

The officials were taken aback as they realised that the king had caught them red-handed. They fell at his feet and asked for pardon. He forgave them, sternly warning them that they should not indulge in such nefarious activities. From that day, they

changed their ways and did their jobs very well and efficiently. Unfortunately, King Sundaresh went back to his old ways and neglected the kingdom's administration, and in no time the officials, too, forgot their assurance to the king and began harassing the people to their own advantage.

Chief Minister Gnanavarma once again met the king and told him of what was happening in the kingdom. "You know very well how I toured the kingdom and pulled up the officials," the king protested. "And they changed their ways. Now it's your duty to ensure that they all worked well." Sundaresh sounded as if he hated to be bothered with the day to day problems.

The minister threw up his hands. There was no point in advising the king any more. He thought for a long time, to find ways and means to change the situation. Suddenly he remembered Paramananda, who also belonged to Saugandhpuri and who had become an ascetic even at a young age earning the people's respect and affection. The rulers of Saugandh used to accept his advice as if it came from the scriptures. Gnanavarma went in search of Paramananda and found him, sage



like, deep in the forest. He told him about the king and the way his rule had degenerated. The minister requested him to visit the capital. Paramananda agreed to meet the king.

When the arrival of the sage at the palace was announced, Sundaresh went out to receive him with due reverence. "My son, you seem to have acquired all the qualities of a ruler, but why is it that your people is unhappy with your rule? Have you ever tried to find out what they lack and what they wish for?"

Sundaresh wondered how the sage had come to know of the affairs





of the kingdom when he was living deep inside the forest. He checked himself from asking Paramananda, and merely said, "O sage! I often go round the kingdom incognito and catch unscrupulous officials. Would you please tell me how I can employ other methods to test their efficiency and integrity?"

"That's impossible, Sundaresh," said the sage. "If a king is clever, he'll be able to ensure the prosperity of his kingdom. It's not enough if you only pick up corrupt officials and prevent their misdeeds. You must find out whether your people are leading a happy, peaceful life.

The duty of a king is to see that his subjects are happy and contented."

"I shall do as you advise, O revered sire!" said King Sundaresh. He remained listening to Paramananda for a long time till the sage got up to go. The king escorted him up to the gate. From then on the king began touring the kingdom more often. Sometimes he would not even wait for the Chief Minister to join him, and would go alone. He was thus able to watch the miseries and agonies experienced by the people. He was also a witness to the harassment meted out by his officials. Without revealing his identity, he went to the help of the people.

However, Sundaresh was unable to leave his life of pleasure. He remained in the company of the dancing girls and musicians. Time passed fast. It was one year after the visit of Paramanand. One day, the sage gave him a surprise by going to the palace and, without waiting to be ushered, entering the king's chambers, where he saw Sundaresh relaxing on his velvet-covered bed enjoying dance and music.

The king got up instantly and prostrated before the sage. One look at his face, and Sundaresh knew that Paramanand was angry and disap-



pointed in him. "It's one year since I came here, and I haven't noticed any changes in the kingdom. Didn't you follow my advice, Sundaresh?"

"O revered sage!" replied the king, not very sure of himself. "I did all that you had told me, and according to your advice. In fact, even last night, I was with a poor family who badly wanted medical attention, but didn't have any money to pay the *vaidya*. So, I arranged for a physician to go there and render all help. I bore the entire expenditure."

"That's all right, Sundaresh," remarked Paramananda. "Didn't I tell you that when you go about incognito, you should have the people's welfare as your target? Did you follow my instructions?"

"Yes, O revered sage!" replied Sundaresh. "I found the poor family in dire circumstances and I helped them out. Isn't that an example of my following your directions?"

"That may be," said the sage as if he was not fully convinced. "What I'm referring to is your going about incognito."

The king still could not understand what Paramanand was driving at. "Yes, I was not in my royal robes," he tried to explain.

"Then, what kind of dress did



you put on?" queried the sage.

"I was wearing the clothes of a poor farmer, when I dropped in at their house," said Sundaresh, hoping his answer would satisfy the sage.

He was not. "A poor farmer, too, is like any other citizen," observed the sage.

"You mean to say, O sage," said the king, "that it was not enough for my mission to walk about incognito?"

Paramanand smiled. "If you were to go about dressed like an ordinary citizen, you'll be taken as one among them. A farmer may become a trader tomorrow, but that does not indicate



a change of dress. You posed like a poor farmer and went to the help of a poor family who wanted a doctor's service. There are umpteen poor persons like that who need medical attention. If you had thought yourself like a king, you would have extended similar help to all of them. You're only trying to help one person here or another person there, instead of helping several more people. You must see that your assistance is available equally to everybody in the kingdom."

King Sundaresh now realised where he had gone wrong. "Yes, O sage! My help was limited."

The vampire concluded his narration there and turned to King Vikramaditya. "O King! Sundaresh did well in waking up from his life of pleasure. So, when he dons the dress of a poor farmer, won't it be enough to make him unrecognisable? There's a limit to anybody making himself

incognito. A king cannot change into a demon or a divine person. Don't you think sage Paramanand was meaning something else? If you know the answers, and yet prefer to remain silent, be forewarned, your head will be blown to pieces!"

"What the sage was trying to tell Sundaresh was that he must be clever," said the king. "Only for that has he been given the robes and status of a king. And accordingly, like a king, he should find out the needs and wishes of his people, and solve their problems. That's what Paramanand wanted Sundaresh also to do—like a king, and not like a poor farmer. He made the king realise that, and did not mean anything else."

The vampire knew that the king had outsmarted him once again. He flew back to the ancient tree, carrying the corpse with him. Vikramaditya drew his sword and went after the vampire.



A Chandamama pull-out

The
Jaisalmer
fort

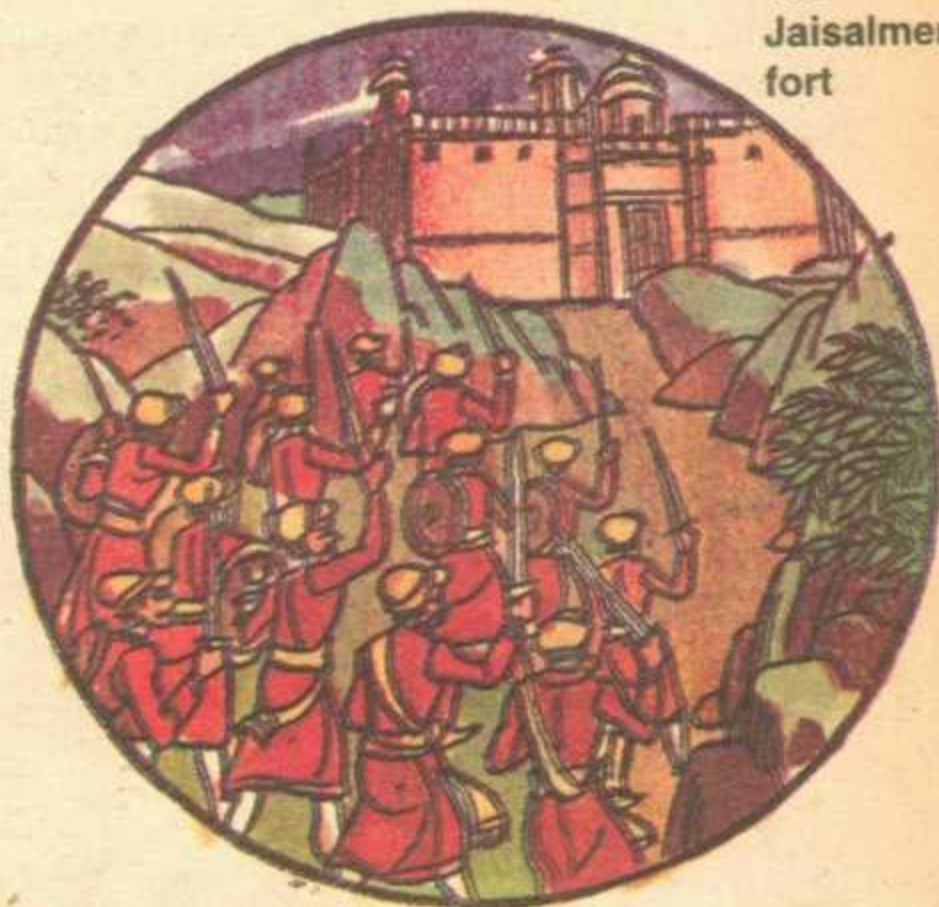
FORTS OF INDIA – 4

Rising out of glittering desert sands, the Jaisalmer fort looks golden as the rays of the rising sun light up its walls of yellow limestone.

The most notable feature of the fort built by the Bhati ruler Rawal Jaisaldeva in 1156 is its double boundary walls. The outer wall is more like a skirt, about half the height of the inner wall. The locals call it *Kamarkot* or *Pada*.

The fort has seen many battles. The longest siege by the Delhi Sultan, Balban, lasted from 1276 to 1283.

Jaisalmer was a flourishing centre of trade. All the caravans coming from or going to Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Persia, Egypt etc. passed through the town. After the Bhaties became allies of Akbar in 1570, trade flourished rapidly. The local Jain merchants built many temples and *havelis* which are famous for their finely carved stone-screen windows and balconies, and for their wall-paintings.



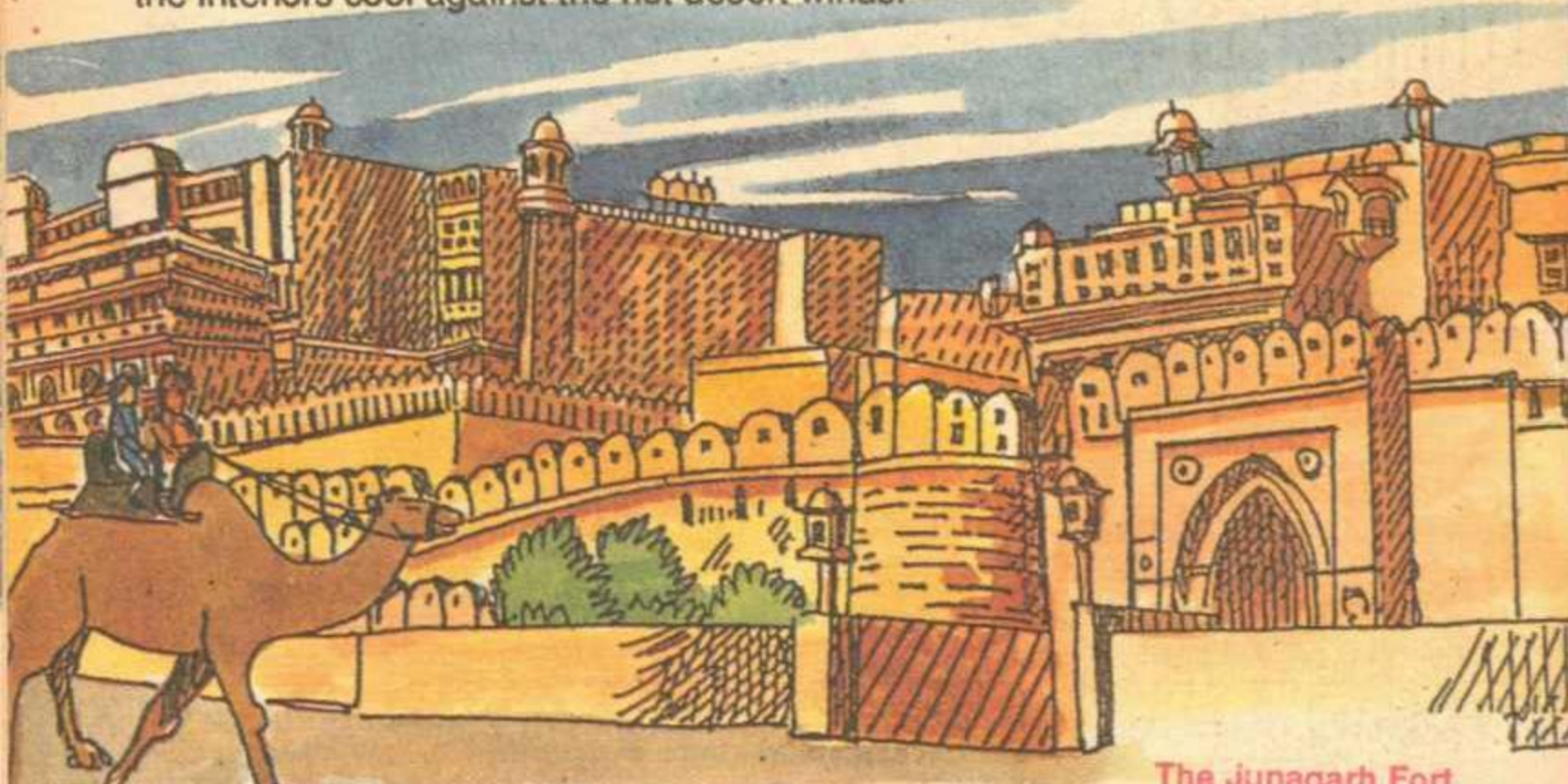
THE RAJPUT BASTIONS - II

Text : Meera Ugra ♦ Drawings : Sulabha Thakur

Intricate window
jalis at Jaisalmer



Relatively new when compared to the other forts of Rajasthan, the Junagarh Fort at Bikaner (1594) is well-preserved. The stone *jalis* of many buildings and the wall-paintings in the palaces of Bikaner are elegant. The stone *jali* in the windows keeps the interiors cool against the hot desert winds.

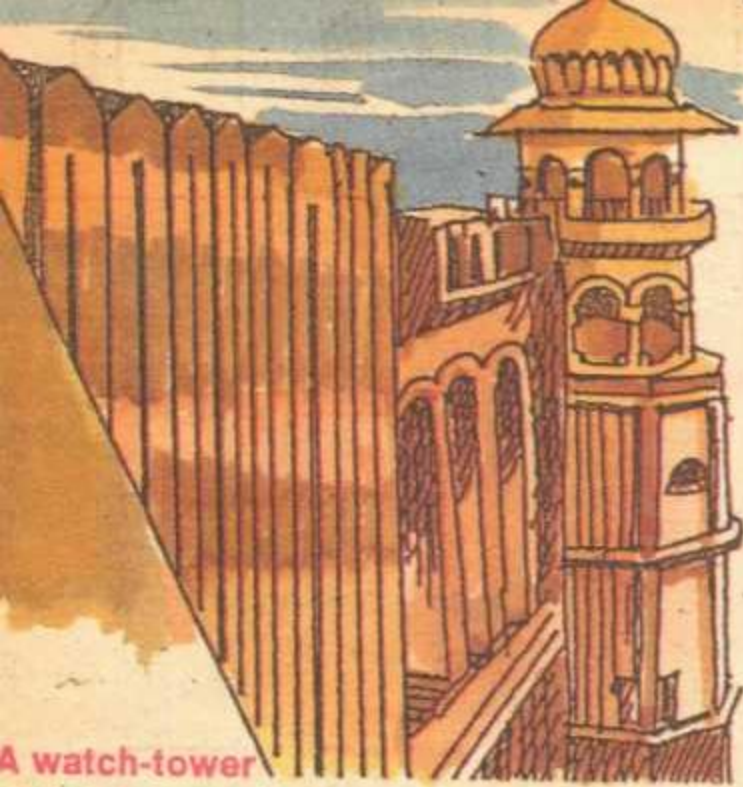


The Junagarh Fort



Interior of a Bikaner palace

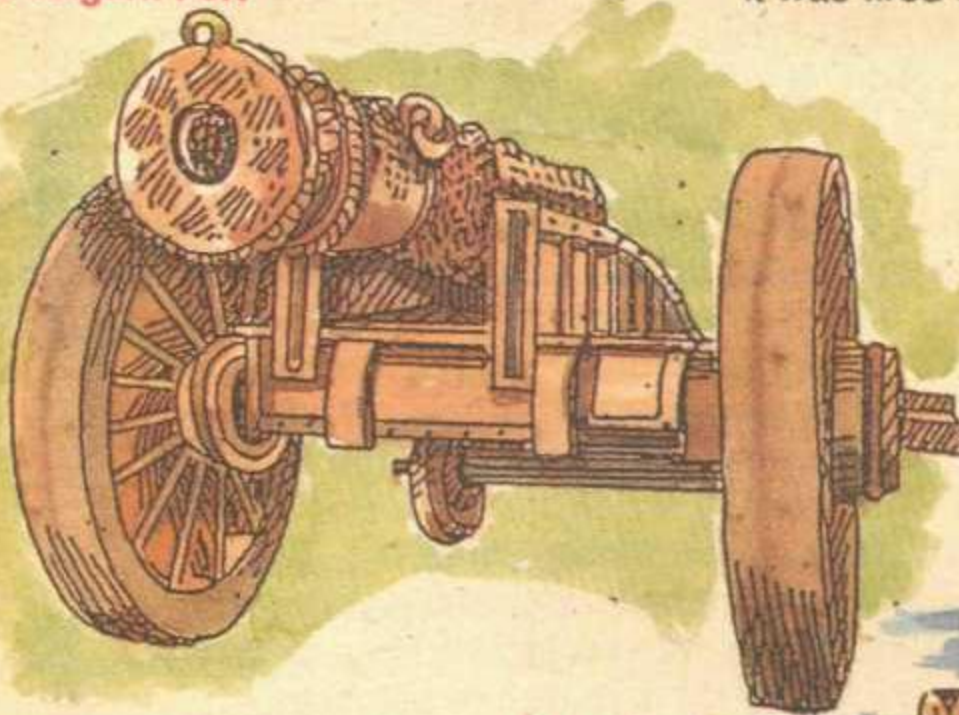
The Ambergarh Fort near Jaipur is famous for the palaces built by the Kachhawaha rulers. Two smaller forts, Jai-garh and Nahargarh, were built as watch-towers for Amber. The three forts never faced any battle or siege.



A watch-tower of the Jaigarh Fort

The Jaigarh Fort, built on the 'Cheelh' hill, had an armoury, a workshop and foundry to cast guns. Its cellars housed the ancestral wealth of the royal family. Secret tunnels connected it to Ambergarh. The Meena tribals who lived in these hills were the custodians of the wealth. The king could draw from it only in times of emergency. He would then be led blindfold to the cellar by a Meena chieftain and could take just enough to meet the crisis.

Jaivaan, a mammoth cannon, said to be the heaviest in India, is also kept at Jaigarh. It was fired only once for testing.



The Jat king Surajmal built the Lohagarh Fort at Bharatpur in 1732 on an existing fort. The outer earthen wall of the fort could easily stand heavy cannon firing.

A 27,000-strong army of the East India Company laid siege to the fort in

November 1825. When 64,446 cannon balls proved futile, 10,000 lb. of explosives were used to blow up the northern wall. The explosion was heard as far as Agra and on 18th January 1826, Bharatpur fell.

The Jaivaan

The Lohagarh Fort

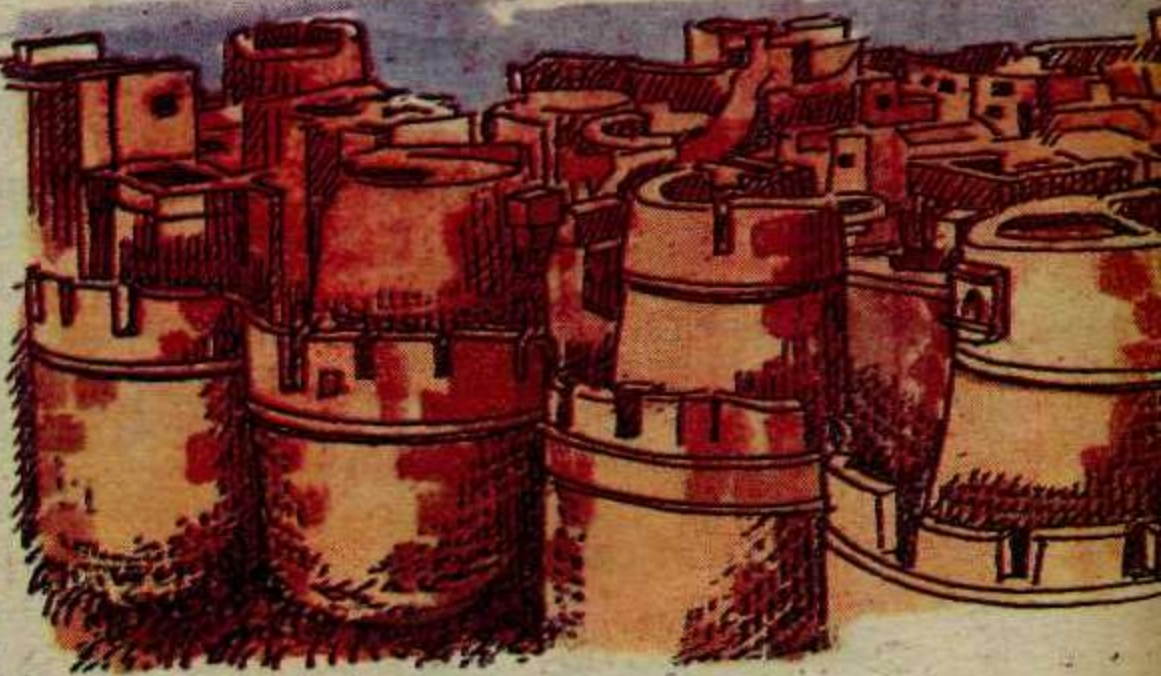


A Hada chieftain, Devasingh, defeated a Meena chieftain, Bundu, in 1241 and established his kingdom, Hadavati or Hadauti, with Bundi as its capital. His great-grandson, Rao Barsingh, built the Taragarh Fort in 1352 and his descendants ruled the state for 600 years.

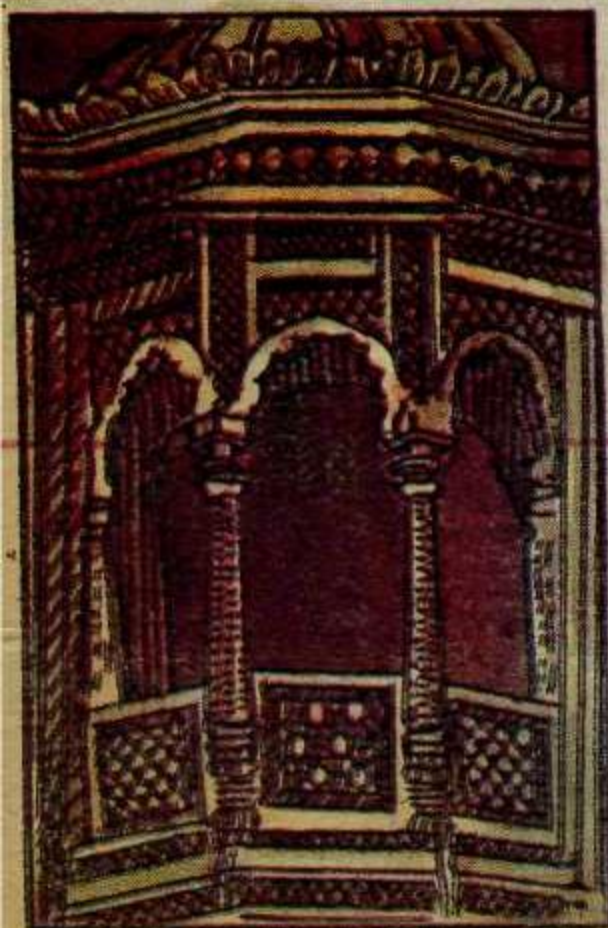
Legends of Hada warriors abound. Once, Rana Lakha of Udaipur took a vow not to eat or drink till he captured Bundi. Concerned about the Rana's failing health, his advisers built a mock 'fort' and asked him to 'conquer' it!

A soldier, Kumbh Hada, was put in charge of the mock fort and was instructed to surrender when the Rana attacked. At the fixed time the Rana's small party 'attacked'. But lo! A shower of arrows issued forth from the mock fort. Surprised and angry, the Rana's soldiers rushed in, only to be confronted by Kumbh Hada, brandishing his sword and saying, "The fort may be a fake but the Hada is real. I'll not let my Bundi fall!" The incident shook the Rana and he gave up all plans of conquering Bundi.

The Bundi Fort had a flourishing artists' workshop which was famous for the *Ragamala*, the *Baramasa*, and other miniature paintings.



A fake encounter



The Taragarh Fort

THE CAT WITH FOUR MASTERS



Once upon a time there lived four good friends. They bought several acres of land and cultivated them. Indeed, they were all capable farmers and their fields yielded handsome returns. They were happy, but one thing bothered them. Had their crops not been infested by rats, their profits would have been much greater! So they decided to buy a Siamese cat.

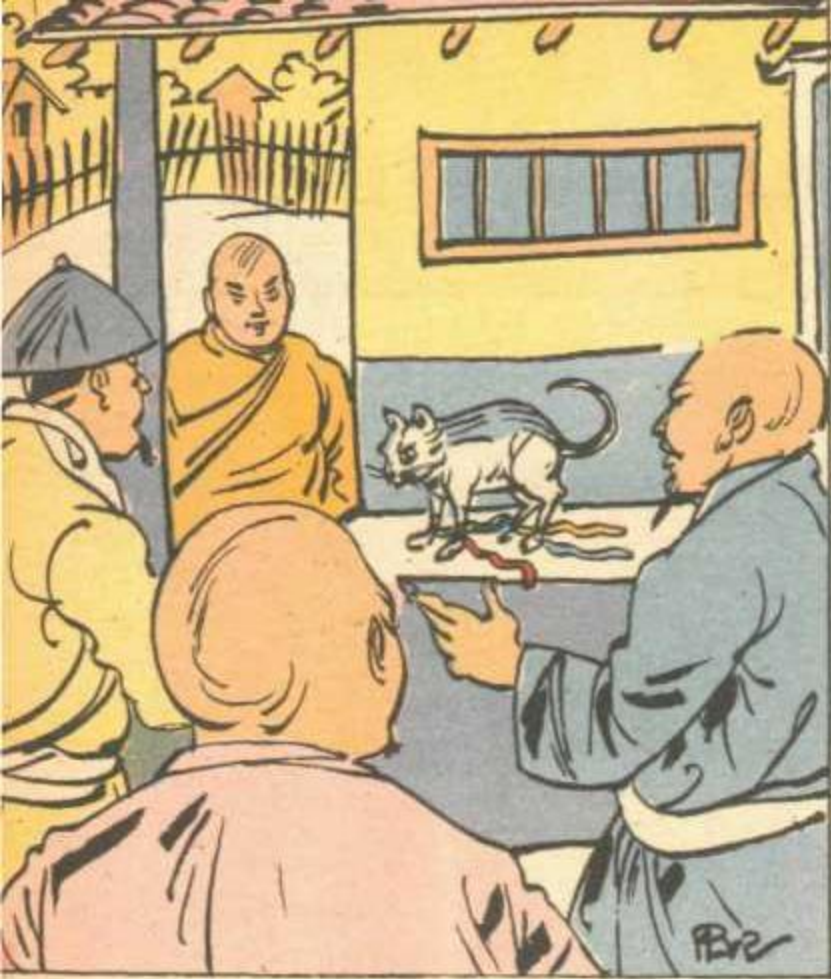
The cat proved to be very efficient and kept the rats off the fields. The four companions were now satisfied and grew richer and richer. One

evening, as they sat chatting after the day's work, one of them suddenly thought aloud:

"Indeed, we have gathered a good deal of wealth. It's likely to increase as years pass. But in future, when required, we may decide to do our business separately."

"That's all right," agreed the second young man. "Even then, we should remain good friends!"

"When that happens, we'll have to divide our farms equally among ourselves," suggested the third farmer, scratching his head.



"Alas," put in the fourth, with a chuckle, "so far, all is well. But, dear brothers, how are we going to partition the cat?"

The four companions, for once, found themselves in a real fix! All night long they thought and thought and, finally, the following morning, each woke up with a solution in his mind and quickly noted it down on a piece of paper, lest it slipped off his memory.

When the four farmers met before setting off to work, they very gladly greeted each other; in fact, each one was proud of his cleverness in solving a dilemma, so difficult and

baffling!

But when they showed their answers to one another, lo! and behold, what did they discover? Well, they had all found one and the same solution!

*"Four ribbons for four legs,
Four legs for four friends!"*
were all that was written on the four pieces of paper.

So four ribbons of four different colours were attached to the four legs of the cat. The leg with the red ribbon belonged to the first farmer, the one with the green ribbon went to the second companion, the third owned the leg with the blue ribbon, and the fourth owned the leg with the yellow ribbon. The four friends patted one another's back for the unity that marked their thoughts.

In a few years, the friends separated and divided the land among themselves.

Well, from then on, the big Siamese cat, with the look of a small tiger, chased the rats with a flash of colours. One day, a white bewhiskered rat led the cat towards the fireplace. It was a hot pursuit and round and round the fire they circled, with the result a burning faggot got entangled with the ribbon on one of the cat's hind legs. Out into the open field



they ran once again, but now with a fire trailing the angry pursuer. Alas, in a trice the crop was ablaze. The four desperate men managed to save their pet and disentangle the half-burnt wood. But they failed to put out the fire which finally destroyed their golden harvest.

It was found that the leg with the blue ribbon had become entangled with the faggot. So the first, second, and the fourth farmers confronted their third companion.

"Friend," they said vehemently, "it was the leg owned by you which caused the havoc. You're responsible for our loss and you must pay for all the damage done."

"But I've spent all my money, feasting and making merry!" replied the third young man.

"Then you must serve us as our slave," demanded the three.

The poor farmer had no option. He served his three friends. Years rolled by; still the value of his services had not yet come up to the total amount of compensation due from him. To make matters worse, he ran further into debt as he married. Time passed and a daughter was born to him and she grew up into a bright little girl.

One day, she asked her father,



rather puzzled: "Papa dear, why do you have to serve as a slave and that, too, for three masters?"

"Alas, my little angel, what should I tell you?" sighed the farmer, and recounted how he came to be in this sorry state.

"Papa, please do not report for work tomorrow." The sunny little child suggested.

The farmer, although perplexed, did as asked by his daughter. The next day, the three masters marched into his hut, seething in anger. As they scolded their slave for absenting from work, out came the little girl.

"My father is not your slave. Do



you understand?" she said, in a stern voice.

"But your father became our slave when he failed to pay the compensation due from him!" muttered the three men, somewhat shaken by the loud outburst of such a small girl.

"In fact, you three naughty friends should pay him for the last several years!" she asserted angrily.

"But it was the leg of the cat that belonged to your father that destroyed our crops!" argued one of the three.

"I see," said the girl calmly. "My dear friends, don't you know that the leg of the cat, with the blue ribbon actually did not want to run into the fields?"

"Then how did it reach there with the burning faggot?" asked the first farmer, rather bewildered.

"As you know, it would not have been able to go there by itself! In fact,

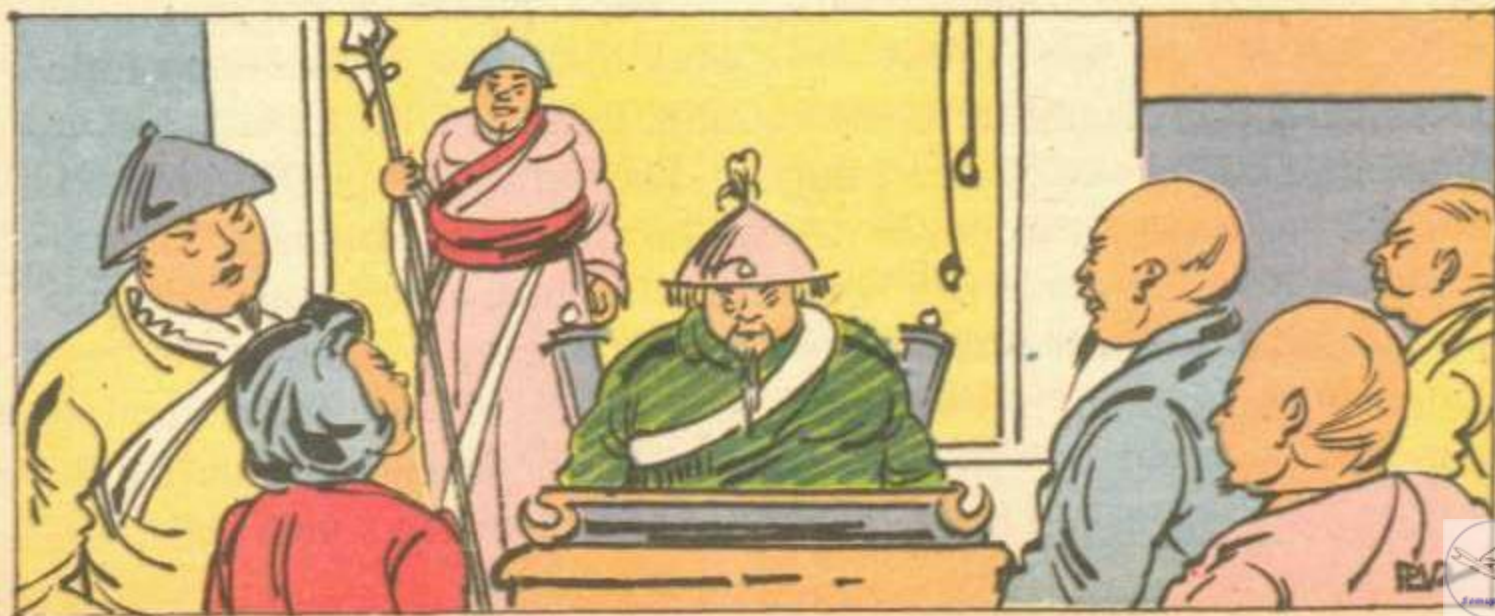
it was taken to the fields by the other three legs and, therefore, you three are responsible!" said the little girl, in an authoritative tone.

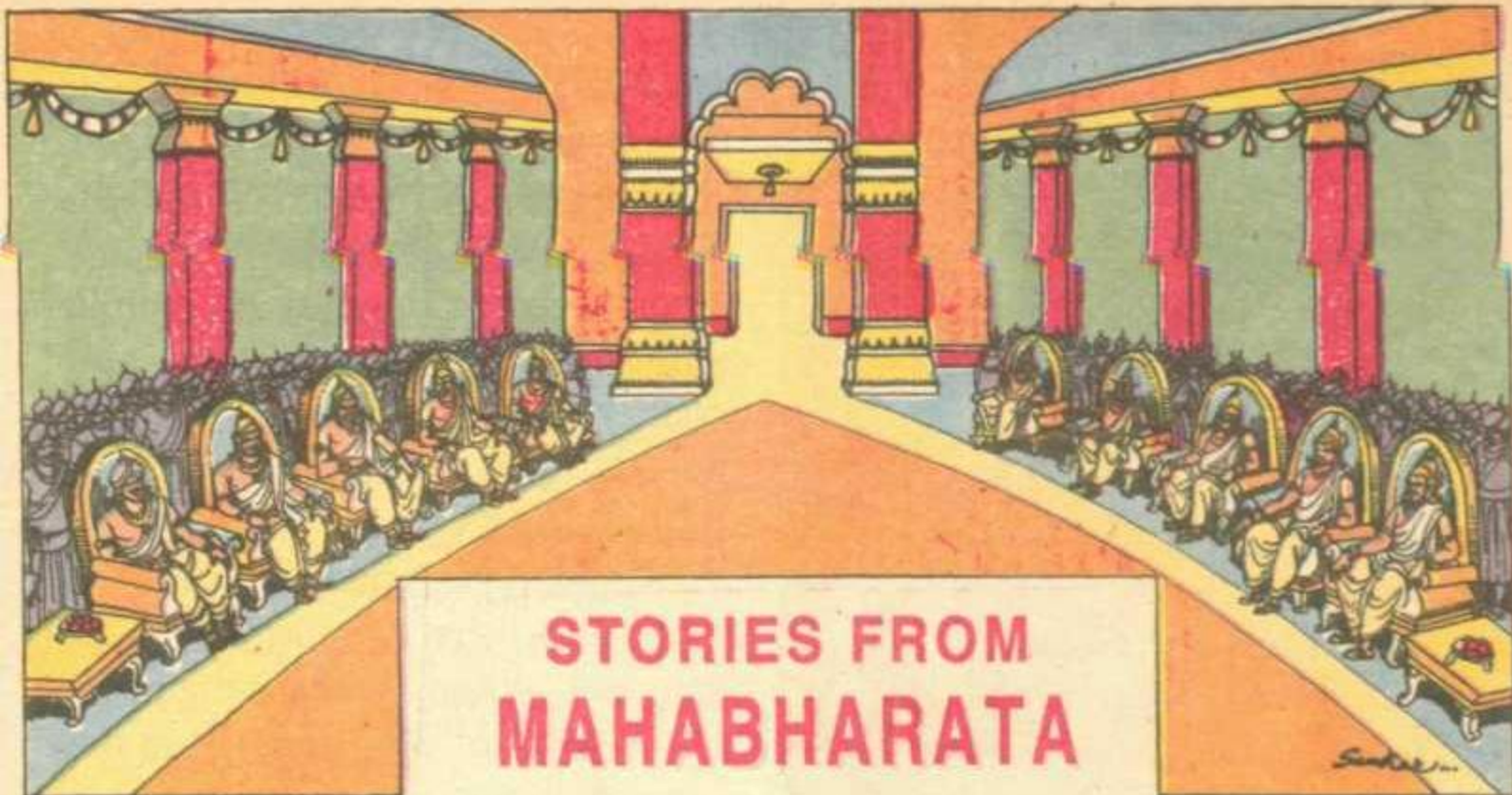
However, the dispute, went to the court. The judge was happy at the brilliant argument of the farmer's daughter. He passed the decree that the owners of the cat's legs with the red, green and yellow ribbons are all guilty and must pay full compensation to the owner of the leg with the blue ribbon.

"Indeed," exclaimed the judge with a smile, "how could the leg with the faggot reach the field if not taken by the other three?"

So, the three masters were compelled to serve the third farmer who now lived like a king. But he had a kind heart and finally forgave them and once more they all lived happily as before.

— Retold by Anup Kishore Das





The story so far :

The Kaurava princes, sons of the blind king Dhritarashtra, conspire with their evil counsellors to kill the Pandava princes and their mother, Queen Kunti.

The Pandava princes and their mother are induced to visit the distant town of Varanasi, where a house has been built for their residence, using the most inflammable materials. But with the help of Vidura, the wise counsellor, the five brothers and their mother escape the fire through an underground passage, and take refuge in the forests, disguised as Brahmins.

They live for a time in the town of Ekachakrapura. The brave Bhima rids the town of an evil man-eating giant.

While the Pandavas were living as Brahmins in Ekachakrapura, they heard of the approaching celebration of the marriage of Princess Draupadi, daughter of Drupada, King of Panchala. Kings and princes of different kingdoms were invited. In accordance with the tradition of *Swayamvara*, the bride was to choose her husband from among the as-

sembled royalty.

King Drupada was nursing a bitter hatred for Drona, the great Brahmin warrior. Yet, he sent his son, Dhrishtadyumna, to Drona to learn the art of warfare.

Many Brahmins of Ekachakrapura planned to visit Panchala with the hope of receiving the customary gifts and to watch the festivities and

well to the fore, and there, too, was Krishna seated beside his elder brother, Balarama.

To the sound of one hundred trumpets, Princess Draupadi entered the hall, accompanied by her brother Dhrishtadyumna. She coyly glanced at the valiant princes, who on their part looked at her in open admiration.

After the priests had recited the usual *mantras*, and the peace invocation had been chanted, Dhrishtadyumna took Draupadi by the hand and led her to the centre of the hall. He then proclaimed; "Mark this bow, assembled suitors, and the target. He who sends five arrows in succession through the hole in the disc, and unerringly hits the target, shall win the hand of my sister, of course, if he be of noble lineage."

Prince after prince came forward and tried in vain to string the bow. They all failed. Now it was the turn of Karna, who strung the bow with surprising ease, but before he could send even his first arrow, Draupadi suddenly spoke out: "As the daughter of a monarch, I will certainly not wed the son of a mere charioteer!"

Karna, head hung in shame, slowly walked back to his seat. At this, there was considerable angry



shouting, some saying that it was an impossible test put up to humiliate the royal guests. But all the noise stopped, for from among the assembly of Brahmins, a youth advanced towards the bow.

It was Arjuna. With a silent prayer to Gods, he took up the bow and, like Karna, strung it with ease. Then, without any pause or hesitation, he shot five arrows in quick succession through the whirling disc right into the target.

The Brahmins shouted with joy. But the princes who were loud in their wrath, shouted, "If Princess Draupadi does not care to marry a



prince, she certainly shall not marry a beggarly Brahmin!"

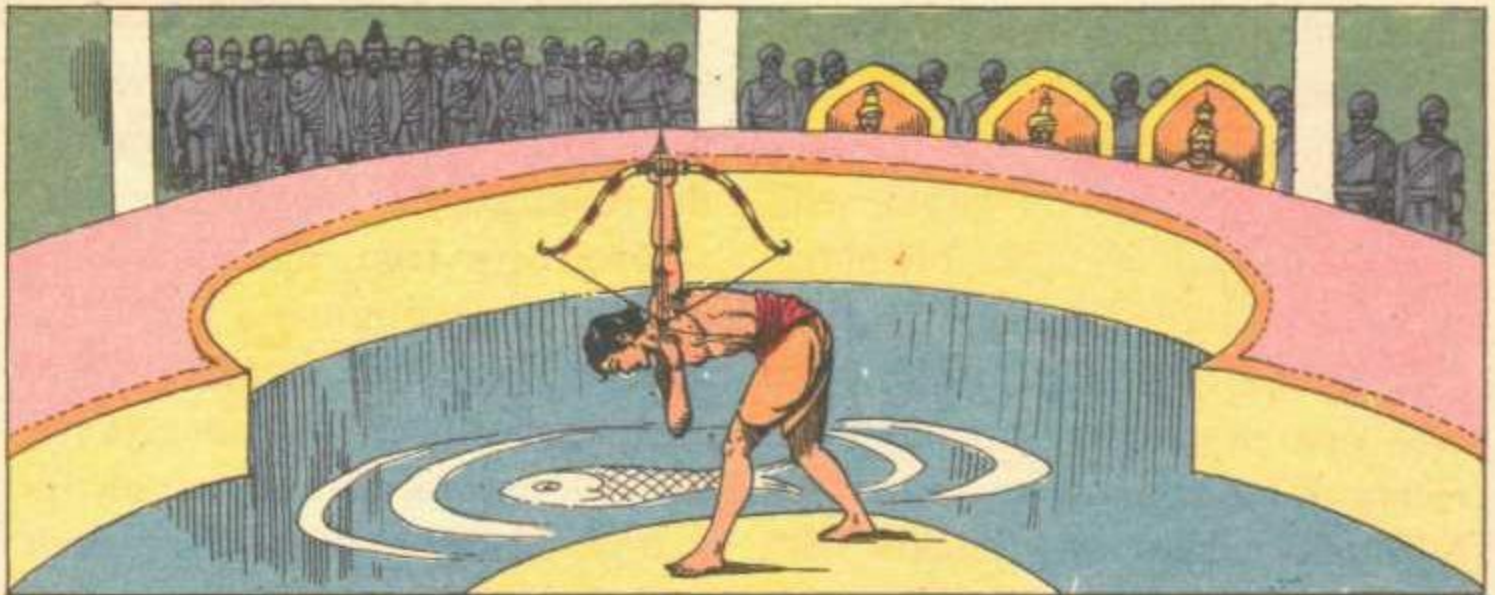
One of the princes even laid his hand on his sword, but Bhima was already by Arjuna's side, ready to fight one and all.

Then Krishna, who was not deceived by the Brahmins' robes, realised that the youths were really the Pandava princes. He strode through the irate suitors, and his calm voice and righteous words calmed the agitated assembly. They understood that they had no right to question the conditions laid down for the wedding of the princess.

Meanwhile the Pandava princes, accompanied by Draupadi, hurried back to the potter's hut to tell their mother, Kunti, of the good luck that had been theirs that day.

When they got to the hut, they left Draupadi outside in order to give their mother a pleasant surprise. They told their mother they had received a great gift.

"Let the gift belong to all five of you," said their mother, not knowing what it was. And as a mother's command cannot be disregarded, Draupadi became the wife of all the five brothers.



Constant application conquers all difficulties

Do a little well, and you do much

Give and spend, and God will send

It is nobler to become great than to be born great.



SPORTS YESTERDAY TODAY TOMORROW

OLDEST

The National Sporting Club of London is one of the oldest sports organisations in Britain. It began its activities in 1891.

FIRST TIME

Automobile racing started in Australia in 1904. In the first ever event held on March 12, that year, Harley Torrent was the winner. He himself had assembled his twin- cylinder 8 hp vehicle.

NEW RECORDS

Nineteen-year-old K. Malleshwari, the reigning world champion, rewrote three national records and created one world record at the National weightlifting Championship held in Pune on March 1. The latter came when she lifted 113 kg in the clean-and-jerk event in 54 kg Women's class, improving her own record of 110 kg set in Istanbul last November. In the snatch event, she

lifted 88 kg, bettering her own 87.5 mark; then totalled 200 kg (against her earlier 197.5 kg), and went over the Asian mark of 112.5 kg made by Y. Lyng of China



in Shillong in 1993. Though happy with her performance, Malleshwari's ambition is to bring an Olympic gold medal for India.

IN GUINNESS

The Madras school boy, 13-year-old V. Kutraleeshwaran, has entered the Guinness Book of Records. His unique feat of completing six long distance swimming adventures in 1994 has been given due recognition. He swam the Palk Straits, English channel, Zannone-Circeo, the Messina Straits, Rottneest channel (Australia), and Andamans. He is not only the first Indian to do so, but the youngest in the world.



WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

India will host the Women's World Cup cricket in 1997. Besides host India, the participating countries are Australia, Denmark, England, Holland, Ireland, New Zealand, and South Africa. In the 1993 World Cup in England, all of them except South Africa had participated.

● The Atlanta Olympics is still a year away. Five hundred T-shirts with the Olympic logo—5 rings— and Atlanta printed on them were offered for sale and the first one went for 26,000 dollars (more than Rs. 8 lakhs)! An industrialist of Santiago is the proud owner.

KING RAGHAVENDRA



(Raghavendra ascends the throne of Kanaka after the death of his father, Veerendra, who had advised him to keep the welfare of the subjects as his prime responsibility. Queen Savitri often reminds her husband of this advice, but Raghavendra disregards all her pleas and goes about mis-spending the taxes he collects from the people much to their distress. His friend, King Chitrasena, from the neighbouring kingdom, too tries to advise him. Their game of chess is disturbed when they hear loud shouts and cries outside the palace. A youth hurls abuses at the king. Raghavendra is angry.)

Raghavendra was infuriated when he heard the boy shouting: "What right does a king have to live if he is callous towards his subjects' misery?" The palace guards were trying to shut his mouth with their hands, but he pushed them aside and continued shouting. Raghavendra hurried to where the boy was standing and slapped his face. "Get out! Since you're a mere boy, I'm letting you go. I would have cut your tongue for making such remarks about me. Go away!" He then pushed the boy so hard that he fell down. Not uttering another word, he stood up and

walked away.

By this time, Chitrasena had joined the king. Raghavendra turned towards the trembling guards. "Who was that imbecile fellow? Why did he come here?"

"Your majesty, his father is seriously ill," said one of the guards, "and the physician wanted a herb to cure him. That grows only in the palace garden, and he had come to fetch it."

"And is this the way he asks for it? He'll never get it from here!" He strolled back to the palace, followed by Chitrasena.

After they were seated once again, Chitrasena said with concern, "My friend, you shouldn't be so harsh towards your subjects. That boy must have asked the guard's permission to see you, and when that was denied, he must have, out of sheer frustration and helplessness, used those words, about you. Try to understand his pathetic condition, my friend; you must help him in his hour of crisis."

"Help?" Raghavendra snapped. "Why should I help? Can a mere boy use such indecent language against his king? How dare he..!" Raghavendra's eyes were red with anger.

Chitrasena realised how futile it was to advise him. He really wanted to help the boy, but he was helpless. He pacified Raghavendra and just when it seemed that the king was having second thoughts about the rare herb, they heard another outburst outside. "O ruthless king! You're the cause of my father's death! Here, take this curse! Exactly two months from now, you too shall die a similar death. You, too, shall not get the herb which will cure your illness. On that day of your death, I shall celebrate by father's birthday!"

After that, everything went calm and quiet. The thundering voice of the beleaguered boy was heard no



more. So furious was he that he even outsmarted the guards who tried to stop him from shouting. The two kings were dumbfounded. The boy's shouts echoed throughout the kingdom. Some people were terrified, not knowing what was going to happen now. They shut their doors tight and advised their families not to venture outside. Others, however, came out to see what was happening around.

Raghavendra's anger subsided and he was now gripped with fear. Had the boy sealed his fate? Was he to meet his end so soon? These thoughts sent a shiver down his body





and he began feeling miserable. King Chitrasena could not do much to pacify him any further. Raghavendra wished to be left alone. He did not even want to meet his wife, Savitri, who bemoaned the curse. Manu, their four-year-old son, did not understand anything that was going on inside or outside the palace. Chitrasena, who was to have returned to his kingdom the next day, postponed his departure on seeing his friend's agony.

Two days passed by, still there was no improvement in the king's mood. He remained sombre, cursing himself for not going to the help of

the boy on that fateful day. What Chitrasena said was indeed correct. It was he, and not the boy, who was at fault. Oh! Why didn't he listen to his friend's advice? This thought made him all the more miserable and restless. Chitrasena at last took his leave, and the two friends had an emotional parting. Raghavendra wept silent tears. Chitrasena could not bear to see his friend weep. "Be brave, my friend! Have trust in the Almighty," was all that he could say.

Back in his kingdom, the noble Chitrasena could not concentrate in the affairs of his kingdom for some days. He was filled with anxiety for his friend. Just then a guard came and informed him that Yogananda was seeking an audience. Yogananda was a great *tapasvi* and had the privilege of having a *darshan* of the Lord. King Chitrasena was overjoyed when he heard the news. He hurried to welcome the sage and made arrangements for his comfortable stay in the palace. After seeking his blessings, the king queried, "O revered sage! Tell me how I could be of service to you?"

The sage gave a benign smile. "I'm on a 'yatra' visiting all the holy places in our land. The 'Maha Kali'

temple in your kingdom is renowned all over the three worlds. I'm here to pay my obeisance to the Divine mother."

Before visiting the magnificent temple of goddess Kali, sage Yogananda had decided to meet the king. He stayed in Chanda for a couple of days. He was attracted by the grandeur of the temple. Its pillars were gold-plated and the floors were embellished with marble. The idol of mother Kali was carved so beautiful that one wondered if it was only an idol or whether the goddess had manifested herself in the temple to bless her devotees! The idol was also very tall. It was placed straight ahead of the main door which had been finished in gold. On either side of the idol were portraits of goddesses Parvati and Durga. Even on his first visit, Yogananda did not want to come away from the temple. So he went there again and again.

King Chitrasena took the blessings of the sage and said, "O revered sage! You must have heard of King Raghavendra of Kanaka."

The sage nodded. "He's notorious for his callous approach towards his subjects. What about him, O king?"

Chitrasena then told him of the



curse by the brahmin boy and how Raghavendra had become desperate. "....If a king remains so dejected, it's ominous for the kingdom as a whole. Enemies might pounce on this opportunity, and disastrous consequences might follow. I, therefore, request you to visit him and advise him and enliven the last few days of his life. I'm really perturbed about my friend."

The sage gave an endearing smile and hinted his acceptance of the king's request.

Meanwhile, in Kanaka, Raghavendra was a picture of sorrow and despair. He felt like renouncing ev-



everything to lead the life of a hermit. He decided to announce his decision to the people. Just when these thoughts were lurking in his mind, Yogananda reached the palace of Raghavendra. The king was delighted to hear about the sage's arrival and hurried to welcome him. He least expected sage Yogananda to grace his kingdom at this moment of extreme anguish. Seeing his pleasant face and the infectious smile on his lips, the king's mind became calm. He felt at peace with himself after a gap of several days. He made Yogananda comfortable by offering him a seat.

"You've indeed honoured me and my kingdom by your presence, O sage!" Raghavendra spoke with great reverence. "Pray, tell me, what task can I accomplish for you?"

The sage spoke benignly. "There's nothing you can do for me, O King of Kanaka! But there's a lot you can do for your own sake and your own self."

The king whose forehead had furrows queried: "I'm sorry, O sage! I'm unable to grasp what you're saying."

"I can well understand the immense anguish you must be undergoing because of that curse, Raghavendra. But, then, by becoming disgusted and despondent, no one is really going to gain. What has happened has happened; by thinking about it again and again is just not going to change the past. Therefore, think about the present that is still lying fresh before you. Never spoil the present thinking about the past. In the next two months in your life, why don't you make up for all the unjust things you've done towards your subjects? You've been a delinquent ruler so far, admit it, O king! So, why don't you realise a king's responsibilities towards his people and execute them effectively



in the last two months of your life? Till now you've lived for yourself. Why don't you now live for the people? Day and night, you should indulge yourself in serving the people, in the betterment of the kingdom. The dignity of a king is to die with a good name and set an example for his descendants. In your childhood days, someone must have told you the story of Rama. It was narrated to you so that you could understand how dedicated a king should be towards his subjects. Rama was ready to make any sacrifice for the sake of his subjects, no matter how difficult the sacrifices, but, as a king you should have some sympathy for your subjects, who have reposed their faith in you for their well-being. Therefore, O king! do your duties earnestly towards your people, at least in these two months. The joy that you would experience from helping the poor, helpless

people, will give you peace. When you die, your people would not take a sigh of relief, but feel sad that they have lost an illustrious king."

Raghavendra listened to him in rapt attention. He was now hopeful of a peaceful end. His future goal came clear in his disturbed mind. He realised that by retiring to the forest, he would only be running away from his duties.

After escorting the sage to his apartments in the palace, the king went back to his chambers and pondered over the sage's words of advice. He realised that Yogananda was right. Why should he depart with a bad name? Why should he be so inconsiderate towards the feelings of others? He decided to strive hard for the well-being and contentment of his subject as long as he lived.

— V. Rajesh

[To continue]



A Summit to Fight Poverty

It is seldom that the heads of state or of government muster in strength to attend a world summit. Nearly 185 countries were invited to the World Summit for Social Development in the Danish capital of Copenhagen from March 6 to 12. Leaders of 121 countries attended the Summit one day or the other during that one week. We are told that the delegates from all the 180 odd nations numbered more than 6,000, while over 1,000 non-governmental organisations, who too had been invited, had sent double that number of representatives. One can, therefore, easily guess the significance of this Summit.

What did these nations discuss and decide ultimately? The theme of the summit, 'social development', means, in simple terms, the welfare of the people and their progress. The leaders agreed that a great many people still suffer from poverty, that a formidable number of people do not know to read and write, and that a majority of the nations have a large number of people without job or work and they either subsist on government doles or are left to languish awaiting a slow death. There was no difference of opinion among them that poverty is linked to peace. India's Prime Minister Narasimha Rao struck a note of caution and said, "Poverty and distress anywhere in the world have the potential to threaten world security,"

and stressed the need to "empower the people as the central strategy to social and economic development to sustain human progress."

This is not the first time that world leaders have expressed their concern over these not-so-political issues that are hampering universal peace. However, the previous summit meetings had placed the "state" at the centre stage to tackle these problems. The Summit in Copenhagen changed all that, and stated that any approach to solve the problems of poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment should focus on the people and for this, the people should be placed at the centre.

This seemed possible because of the presence of and interest shown by so many non-governmental organisations, a fact noticed and hailed by the world leaders, who called for greater people participation in all alleviation programmes at the grassroots level.

Prime Minister Narasimha Rao regretted that mankind had "spent almost the whole of the 20th century perfecting weapons of destruction", but saw a sign of hope inasmuch as at least now "towards the end of the century, it (mankind) had taken up the tremendous task of construction." He said, "international cooperation in an inter-dependent world is the only way" to meet challenges like eradication of poverty and illiteracy.

The Intoxicating Mohwa

That bears like honey is known to everybody. Bears in north India, especially Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh, love to eat the flowers of *Mohwa*, which they find delicious. They eat as much of them as they can and sometimes get intoxicated and behave like drunkards! As the *Mohwa* grows wild in the north, the flowers become staple food for the tribals living in the forests, especially when they are not cultivating rice. They sweep the ground below the tree to collect the light yellow flowers which bloom at night and fall down before sunrise. The flowers are dried and preserved to be consumed all through the year. They can be eaten raw or cooked and made into sweetmeats. The story is that the Maratha rulers used to cut down the *Mohwa* trees to starve the tribals who proved to be lawless!

Very few trees in India are as stately as the *Mohwa* (or *Mahua*, *Madhuka* in Sanskrit, *Mahuda* in Gujarati, *Illupai* in Tamil, *Ippa* in Telugu, *Ilupa* in Malayalam, Indian Butter tree in English) grows like an umbrella and reaches a height of 20 metres. The leathery leaves, elliptical in shape, are clustered near the ends of branches. They fall down towards the end of winter. The flowers, too, appear at the end of the branches in spring after the tree sheds its leaves. The fruit, greenish in colour, is fleshy and hairy and is egg-shaped. The timber is hard and good for furniture, but is seldom used for that purpose, as the flowers and fruit are more valuable commercially. The oil extracted from the fruits is used for making soap and margarine. The flowers, the bark, as well as the milky sap of the tree are all used in medicinal preparations and are, therefore, in great demand.



VISVAMITRA

While reading about the great sage Vasishtha, you also read some important incidents in the life of Visvamitra.

Such is human nature that, although Visvamitra achieved much as a sage and Yogi, he could not rise above his envy towards Vasishtha. That was his biggest weakness.

There was a prince called Satyavrata who was unruly and lustful. His father, the king, expelled him from the kingdom. He went into a forest and lived there.

In the same forest lived Visvamitra's family. Once when Visvamitra was away for a long time, a famine visited the area and his wife and children were starving. Satyavrata began giving them food day after day.

One day, as Satyavrata could not lay his hands on any animal, he killed one belonging to Vasishtha and himself ate its flesh and gave a part of it to Visvamitra's family. When Vasishtha came to know about it, he cursed Satyavrata.

But when Visvamitra returned to his hut and learnt about the help Satyavrata had rendered to his family while he was away, he took a great liking for the exiled prince.

After some years, when Satyavrata had been sufficiently punished, he was called back by his father. After the

king's death, he ascended the throne.

Vasishtha was the priest of the king's family. Satyavrata developed a desire to go to heaven. Well, if one did severe penance and pleased the gods, one could go to heaven after one's death. That is to say, one's spirit or soul could dwell in heaven. But Satyavrata requested Vasishtha to perform such a Yajna which would enable him to reach heaven physically.

Vasishtha told him that no such Yajna was possible. No one could ever go to heaven along with one's physical body. As Satyavrata insisted on fulfilling his desire, a quarrel broke out between the two. Vasishtha condemned him as Trisanku – or one who had committed three sins.

Satyavrata, more popularly known as Trisanku, sought Visvamitra's help. Visvamitra took up his cause zealously, perhaps more to prove Vasishtha wrong than to help Trisanku.

He performed a special Yajna and Trisanku, indeed, succeeded in reaching the gates of heaven. But the gods would not let him enter their realm. He was pushed down. While coming down headlong towards the earth, he called out to Visvamitra.

"Stay where you are!" shouted Visvamitra. Trisanku remained suspended in space. Visvamitra applied the power of his askesis and created for

him a different heaven. Thus, Trisanku continued to dwell in that new creation.

All such myths have a deeper meaning. Be that as it may, this myth no doubt asserts that spiritual powers can achieve the impossible.

Visvamitra once married Menaka, the nymph, and lived with her for a while. A beautiful child was born to them, and she was none other than Shakuntala, who married King Dushyanta. It is their son, Bharata, after whom our motherland is believed to have got its name – Bharatavarsha.

The other famous story in which Visvamitra figures prominently is that of King Harishchandra, the son of Trisanku. Because Vasishtha praised the young king, Visvamitra decided to put him to a severe test. He met him as an old Brahmin and desired alms. When the king promised to give him whatever he asked for, he asked for everything he owned! Thus, the king was deprived

of his kingdom as well as all his wealth. Even then, Visvamitra would not leave him, for custom demanded that a donation must be followed by another gift, known as *Dakshina*. The king and the queen sold themselves as slaves and worked hard at Kashi, separated from each other, to pay the *Dakshina*. While the king worked as a watchman of a cremation ground, the queen and her little son worked in the household of a Brahmin, who was none other than Visvamitra. One evening, the little son died of snake-bite. Carrying the dead body to the cremation ground, the queen met the king and both decided to sacrifice themselves on their son's funeral pyre. But the gods appeared before them and so did Visvamitra. The king had passed the test most successfully.

The dead prince got back his life and the king and the queen got back their kingdom.



DO YOU KNOW?

1. Which are the Indian States collectively known as the 'Seven Sisters'?
2. Who invented the dynamo?
3. When did India's Sunil Gavaskar retire from First Class cricket?
4. Which is the largest city in the African continent?
5. In which part of India is Tulu spoken?
6. A set of fearless warriors were known as the *Samurai*. Where did they live?
7. Which is the oldest among the existing newspapers in India?
8. Which is the largest bell in the world?
9. Who was the founder of the Maurya dynasty in India?
10. What was the ancient name of Tunisia?
11. On which river does the city of Ahmedabad stand?
12. The legendary bridge that Lord Rama built to cross over to Lanka is known as....
13. Which is the largest bay in the world?
14. What is the present name of Utkal? It is an Indian State.
15. Who was the first Indian to play in a Test match?
16. Who is credited with inventing the television?

ANSWERS

- | | |
|---|---|
| 16. John Logie Baird. | 7. <i>Bombay Samachar</i> |
| 15. K.S. Ranjitsinhji – after whom the annual Ranji Cricket tournament is called. | 6. Japan. |
| 14. Orissa. | 5. South Kanara, in Karnataka State. |
| 13. The Bay of Bengal. In area, it is the largest. | ago. |
| 12. Adam's Bridge. | 4. Nile, it was founded more than 1,000 years ago. |
| 11. The Sabarmati. | 3. In November 1987 – after the semi-final of the Reliance World Cup. |
| 10. Carthage. | 2. Michael Faraday. |
| 9. Chandragupta Maurya. The name Maurya derived from 'Mura' – his mother. | 1. Tipura. |
| 8. The Great Bell of Moscow | Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura. |





Fresh from the oven

Sudhakar of Satyapur was as usual chatting with his friends in the evening, seated beneath the huge banyan tree. Suddenly, they heard running steps approaching them. The man was the servant attached to the family of Sudhakar's daughter-in-law. The girl had been sent to her parents' house in the neighbouring village for her first confinement.

Sudhakar guessed that the man had been sent to tell him that he had become a grandfather. "You've brought good news, haven't you?" he asked of the man. "Let me hear it from your own mouth."

"Yes, sir," the man smiled. "A grandson has been born to you. I was sent by my master to inform you of this news."

Sudhakar pulled out a rupee from his pocket and gave it to him. "I'm indeed happy. Please keep it as a small token of my happiness. Do me

a favour. Please go to my place, collect a bag, and come over to Narayan's Restaurant. I shall wait for you there."

As soon as the servant left for Sudhakar's residence, he excused himself from his friends and proceeded to the restaurant. The proprietor Narayan welcomed Sudhakar, asking him to take a seat. "It's nice to see you, sir, after a long time."

Before he sat down, Sudhakar went near the showcase and inspected the sweetmeats arranged in front of the mirrored shelves. "Are these *laddoos* and *mysore pav* fresh?" he asked of Narayan. "Would you have a hundred laddoos and a hundred pieces of mysore pav?"

"Of course," said Narayan. "They have just been prepared. Hot from the kitchen. I shouldn't say it, but our laddoos are quite popular in this area," said Narayan proudly.



"Is it so?" Sudhakar expressed his appreciation. "It must be quite a job to prepare them and arrange so beautifully on the shelves."

"No doubt about it, sir," Narayan obliquely voiced his gratitude. "Why should I say it, sir? The mysore pav itself takes a minimum two days to be arranged like this. It has to be done very carefully, so that every piece remains intact and does not break up. Cooking them is not that difficult. It takes only five hours. Similar is the case with the laddoos. They, too, take two full days by the time they are arranged in the shelves. It's not an easy joke to run a restaurant. It involves a lot of strain and effort."

By then the servant from Sudhakar's daughter-in-law's house arrived there with a bag. "Bring it over here," said Narayan. "I shall pack the mysore pav and laddoos you have asked for," he added, turning to Sudhakar.

"No, thank you," said Sudhakar. "Look here, you may go back to your place," he told the servant, who then went away. He, too, started moving out of the restaurant.

It was then that Narayan realised that he should not have bragged about the sweetmeat. He regretted that he failed to control his tongue that day. Sudhakar was not present to see him hit his head in disappointment at having lost a customer.

Music will not cure the tooth-ache

Conscience is equal to a thousand witnesses





Who is a true sanyasi?

Keshav, a young man of Kantapura, was a voracious reader. He acquired a lot of knowledge from the several books that he read. His countrymen would call him a *pundit*, but their constant praise went to his head and he became conceited and arrogant. He went about claiming that there was none more knowledgeable in the world than he and he was, therefore, a great man.

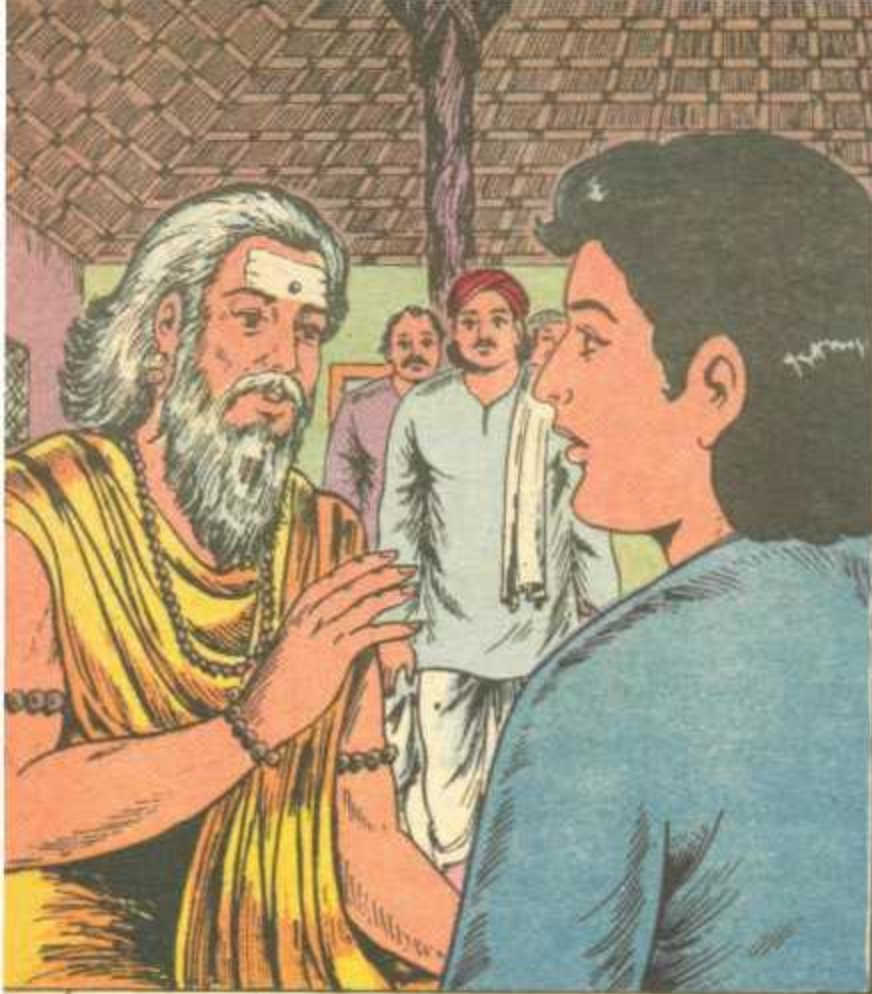
One day, Kantapura had a visitor. The people received the *sanyasi*, Shantasheel, with reverence and took him to the residence of a rich man, who requested him to stay with him as long as he remained in Kantapura. The sanyasi gave discourses every morning and evening, advising the people on themes like respect for the elders, honesty, courtesy, humility, and friendship with everybody. He soon became a popular figure in Kantapura, and people stopped go-

ing to Keshav for advice, as they all once used to. They now looked at him with disdain when they realised that he had only superficial knowledge.

Naturally, Keshav was jealous of Shantasheel. He believed that the sanyasi had deliberately come to Kantapura to slight him and destroy his popularity. He tried to impress on the people that the sanyasi's advice was all worthless and that he could give them better counsel. But when they still boycotted him, he went about remarking that the people were unintelligent and did not know how to take advantage of his advice.

One day, Keshav went to meet Shantasheel, and had the audacity to ask him, "Sire, how far did you study?"

"Oh! You mean schooling? Unfortunately, I didn't study in any



school. I don't have that kind of learning or knowledge. My parents taught me to work hard even when I was young. All the knowledge I have acquired is through my work and experience."

"I've acquired all *my* knowledge by reading great books," Keshav bragged. There was a touch of arrogance in his statement.

"You're really a blessed person," said Shantasheel simply.

"There you've gone wrong, sire!" responded Keshav, with a sneer. "In fact, you're very fortunate. Look at the people. They don't care for me, though I've more knowledge than

what you've acquired. They don't come to me for advice any more. Instead, they have more respect for you and accept your advice. How can I, therefore, be called blessed?"

Shantasheel was by now able to assess Keshav's nature. "I don't impose my advice on anyone; in fact, I don't force anyone to attend my discourses. I've never demanded any courtesy or special respect from them. They seem to like my discourses, and they love me. So, I can't hate them or be inimical to them. For that matter, I don't approve of their extreme regard for me."

"I've studied more than you have," said Keshav. "If the people were to show me respect again, we must have a contest between us and they'll then know how deep is my knowledge. Are you agreeable to such a contest?"

"I may not be as learned as you are, Keshav," replied Shantasheel, "but I've realised a truth by now. You're not practising what you preach. You must learn under some *guru* for a while."

Some people, who were waiting for an audience with the sanyasi, laughed derisively. Keshav's face fell. "Sire, you're a widely travelled person," he said. "Would you sug-



gest somebody who's qualified to become *my* guru?"

"There's someone, and he is called Vanidas," said the sanyasi. "He's a highly learned person, and a great poet, too. His fame has spread far and wide. He goes round reading his works to the people. He does that not to earn any praise, but to find out whether there is anyone who can point out mistakes in his writings, if any. So far, none has come forward to point out even a single error. He's sure to visit Kantapura, one day, and you must meet him then and ask him to become your guru."

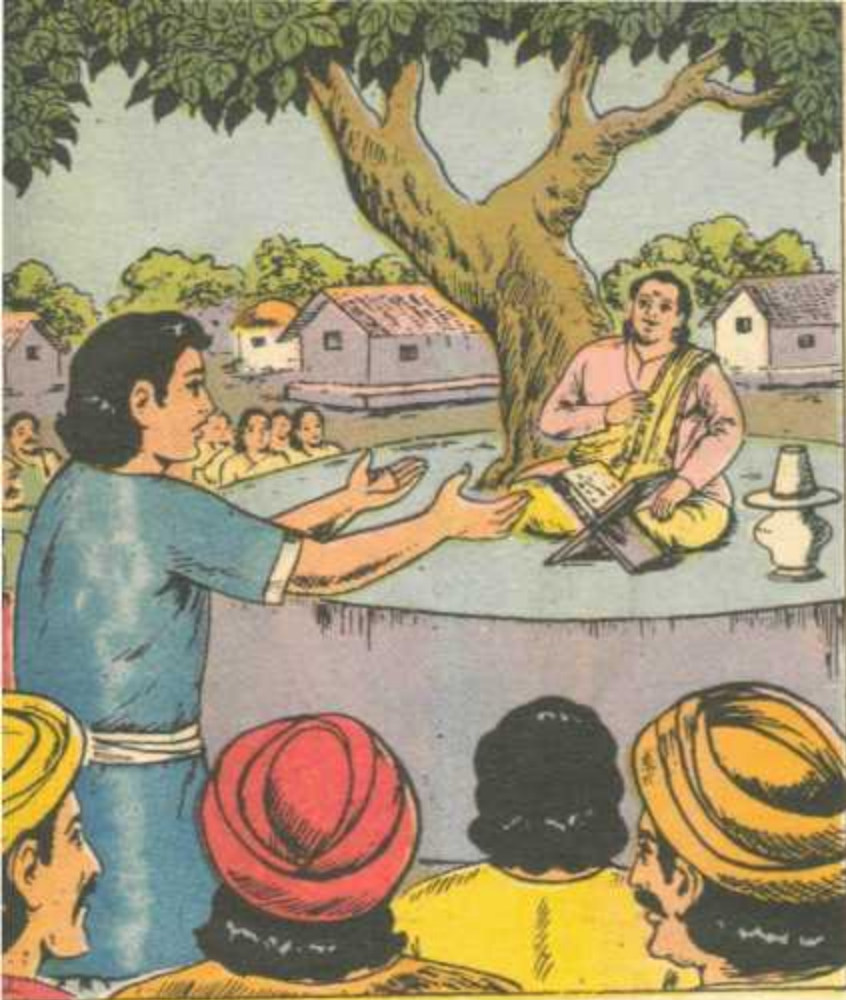
Keshav eagerly awaited the visit of Vanidas. One day he arrived in Kantapura. He was accompanied by his wife and children. The village *pradhan* made arrangements for their comfortable stay, and for him to recite his work for the benefit of the people. One of them was the story of an illiterate called Nana. He is very lazy, too. He has not read a single book, but he becomes a sanyasi and over night people take him to be a great scholar and praise him sky-high.

This was the story of Nana. While reading out the story, Vanidas also explained the moral of the story to his listeners, who included Keshav.



"On the contrary, your story will give wrong ideas to the people," he argued after getting up from his seat. "You say that somebody, who had no education or job, can become a sanyasi and earn the approbation of everybody? They may take it as if anybody or everybody can easily attract people to them by turning a sanyasi. This will only result in the mushrooming of sanyasis in the country. Nobody will want to work and earn. If there are no workers, nobody will be available to build a house. Why, you won't even get a piece of cloth made to cover yourself up," added Keshav with an air





of erudition.

Vanidas was not upset by this criticism of his story. "Human beings are also like animals. Do they build houses? Do they stitch dresses for themselves? Do they cultivate foodgrains?" he asked and waited for an answer from the audience.

"Do you mean to say that human beings should live like animals – without dress, house, or food? Does this advice come from an intelligent person like you?" Keshav taunted him.

Vanidas took a good look at him from head to toe. "Man is part of society. Men live in groups. Even if

he were to wish to, he can't become an animal. Likewise, nobody can become an instant sanyasi. People won't accept such sanyasis. That you didn't build a house, stitch a dress for yourself, or cultivate whatever you require for food need not bother you."

Some more laughter arose from the audience. Keshav now put on a shame-faced appearance. He did not want to let off Vanidas easily. "Does a literary work earn fame just because it comes from a sanyasi?" he asked.

"A sanyasi is not one who has discarded his wife and children," Vanidas tried to explain. "He is a true sanyasi who abjures arrogance, discards selfishness, and does not solicit praise. I don't go after a name or fame."

Keshav persisted. "If you don't care for praise, then why should you indulge in discourses and recitations and all that?" he asked unashamedly. "You want to achieve something for yourself, don't you? There are works already written by great people. Instead of reading them out and reforming people, you are reading out to them your own books with the sole object of earning fame. You really wish for fame and popularity."

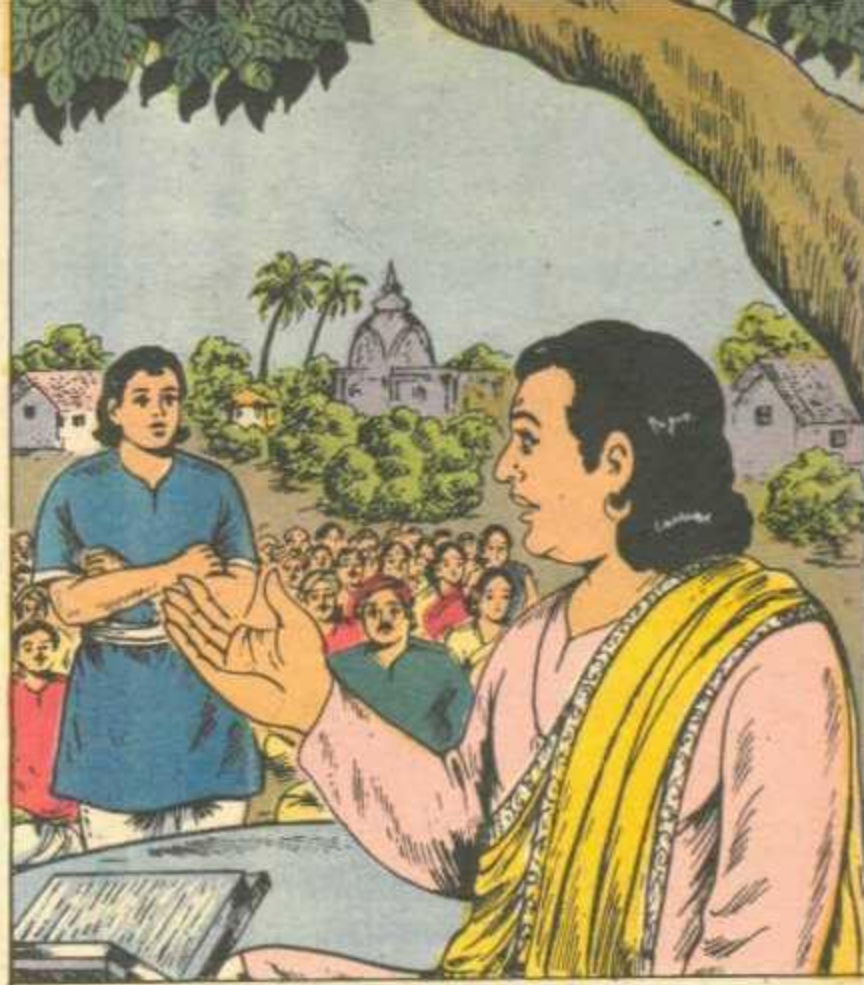


"That's why you're roaming from one country to another."

"I don't introduce any book or story to the people as *my* work," said Vanidas. "I don't aspire for a name nor have I any craving for money. Wherever I go, I take my family along with me. That way, I'm not being selfish. My only aim of wandering from place to place is to reform people and make them happy through my discourses and my recitations."

"In ancient times, man went about naked," the sanyasi continued. "He didn't wear any dress. He covered himself with leaves. Later, he began using barks from the trees. Nowadays he spins yarn from cotton and weaves cloth to make dresses. Likewise, as years pass, there is improvement in the lives of men. However, man continues to experience the good and the bad. This is true with literature, too. A lot of development is taking place in that area. New books are being written. New writers are being born. You can learn a lot more if you keep abreast of these developments. Nobody can stop or prevent changes that are taking place all around."

Keshav stood still as he listened to Vanidas. Sure, the sanyasi knew



much more than what he himself had grasped all these years. He still wished to steal a march over him. "I agree to all that you say, but I can't understand why you should take your family along wherever you go."

"It is my wife who helps me in my writing work," said Vanidas. "That's why I don't claim any of my book as *my* writing. It's all a combined effort. I don't go about bragging that I'm a scholar or a much-learned person. If you find a book authored by Vanidas, the first part of the name comes from Vani, which is my wife's name; Das is the second part of my real name – Ramdas. So,





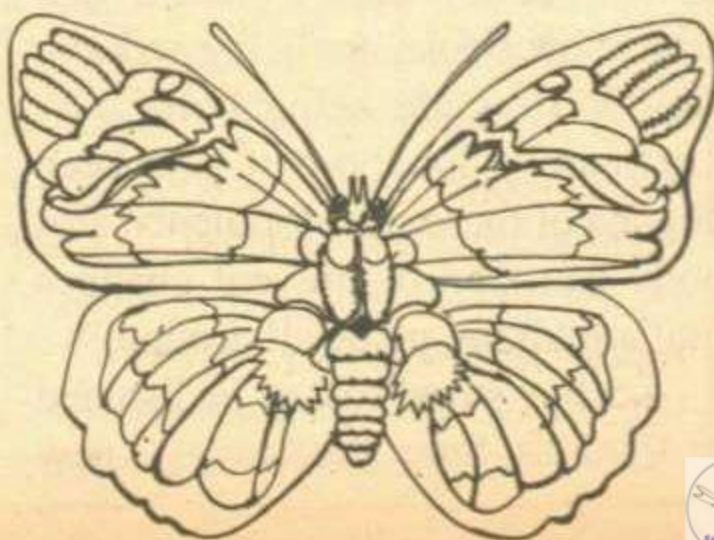
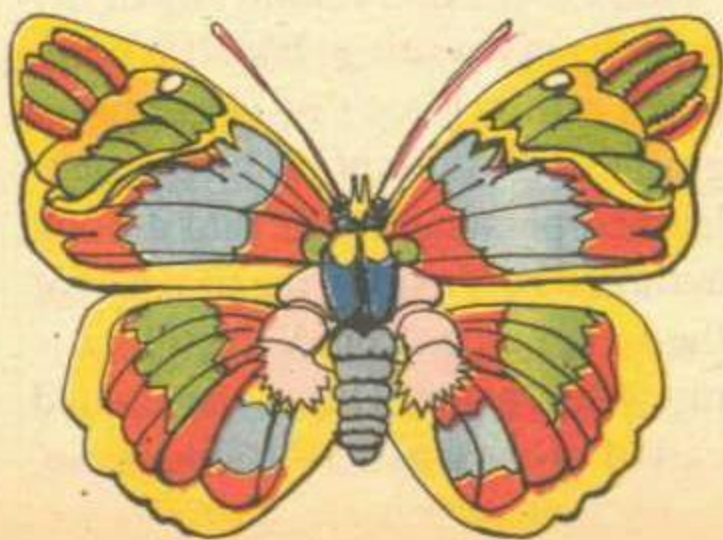
no fame can come to me alone. My entire family shares whatever we receive – good or bad."

Keshav fell at the feet of Vanidas. "Please forgive my impudence. I have realised my limitations and shortcomings. I shouldn't have wished to insult you as I did. Now it has all rebounded on me. Not only

that. I've now become the butt end of people's ridicule. You've already taught me the first lesson – that one should respect another. From now on, you're my guru!"

Vanidas accepted Keshav as his disciple. Soon, his arrogance vanished and he behaved with humility in the presence of others.

WONDER WITH COLOURS





LET US KNOW

What is the Fourth Estate? Which are the three other Estates?

– *Aparajita Chakraborty, Dombivli*

In medieval England and France, there were three groups of people who were given certain prescribed share in government. These three *estates* were: the **nobility**, the **clergy**, and the **commons**. A time came when the Press (newspapers) also became a politically powerful entity – wielding power to make and unmake governments through their writings – and it came to be called the 'Fourth Estate'. The term generally means the newspapers.

What is the difference between a visa and a passport?

– *G.M. Shinde, Nipani*

A passport is issued by the country of which you are a citizen, while a visa is the entry permit you have to obtain from the country you wish to visit. You are an Indian citizen, so you obtain an Indian passport. You wish to visit the U.S.A., and you secure an entry permit from the U.S. embassy in India, which issues a 'visa' for a specific period or number of days.

THANK YOU!

Chandamama is a great magazine for healthy entertainment and gives high class information on the unique culture of India.

– *B.S.S. Kameshwar Rao, Kagithapuram*

It goes without saying that your column 'Towards Better English' provides valuable knowledge on English usage.

– *Saswata Kumar Jena, Cuttack*

I appreciate the folk stories and the ancient stories of Vikram and the vampire. I hope the publication will show the unity and diversity of the country.

– *Abhilash G. Sampat, Powai*

PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



Shanbagavalli



Sundaramurthy

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PICKS FROM THE WISE

Few, save the poor, feel for the poor.

— L.E. London

The newspaper press is the people's university.

— Parton

Law is mighty ; necessity is mightier.

— Goethe



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What a miracle!

IT WAS A PLEASANT EVENING. SONU WAS RETURNING HOME FROM SCHOOL. SUDDENLY THERE WAS A GUST OF WIND. A FLYING-SAUCE FLEW DOWN FROM THE SKY AND STOPPED RIGHT IN FRONT OF SONU.

A VERY SHORT CREATURE APPEARED FROM IT AND ASKED SONU...

"WILL YOU BE MY FRIEND?"

"B.B...BUT WHO ARE YOU?"

"I HAVE COME FROM MARS TO MAKE FRIENDS HERE."

BEFORE SONU REALISED, HE HAD AGREED.

"ALL RIGHT"

"OK! SO, HERE'S TO OUR FRIENDSHIP! A MIRACLE FROM YOUR EARTH WHICH IS VERY DEAR TO ME."

"MIRACLE?"

"OF COURSE! A MANGO-TREAT WITH NO SKIN, NO SEED."

"MANGO? IN WINTER? OH! I CAN'T WAIT?"

"OK, FRIEND, OPEN YOUR MOUTH WIDE, CLOSE YOUR EYES TIGHT AND ENJOY MY FAVOURITE MANGOBITE."

"WOW! MANGOBITE!" SONU WAS REALLY THRILLED. HIS FAVOURITE MANGOBITE WAS ALSO A FAVOURITE ON MARS!

AS SOON AS SONU PUT THE MANGOBITE INTO HIS MOUTH, HIS NEW FRIEND GAVE HIM A BOX FULL OF MANGOBITES, AND FLEW OFF SCREAMING, "SEE YOU SOON!"



PARLE
mango bite

